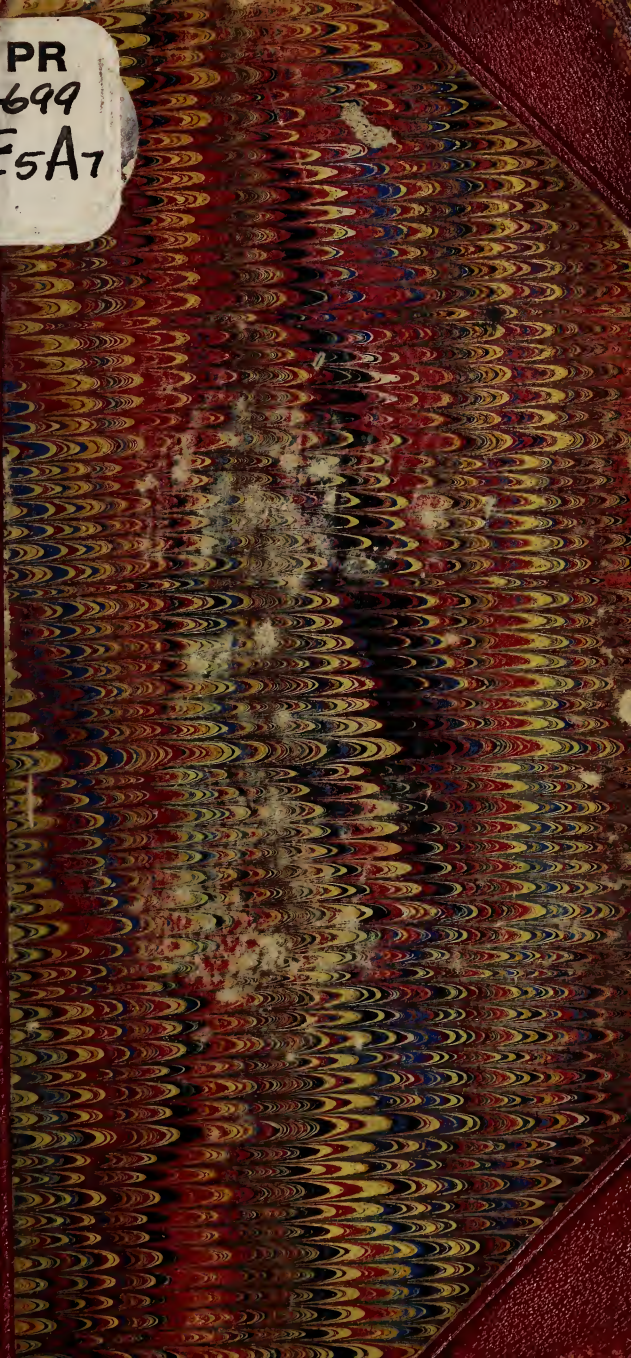


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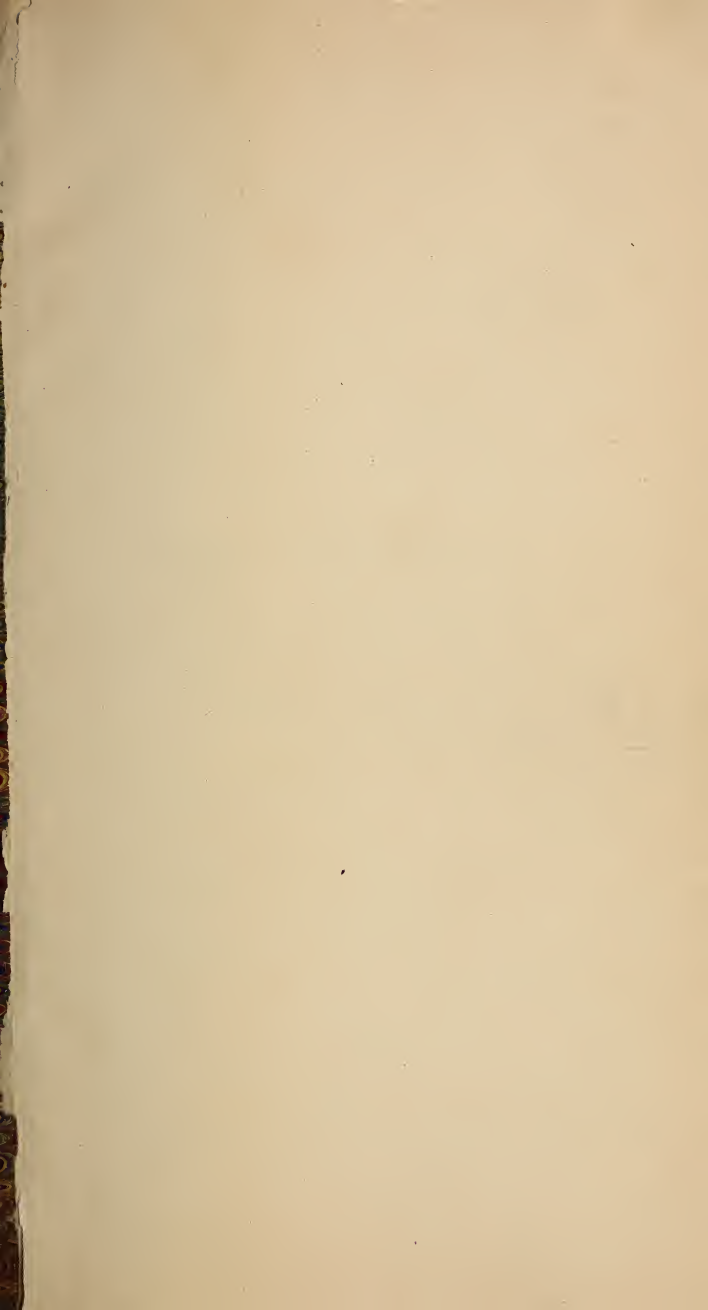


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PETER FAULTLESS,

AND.

OTHER POEMS.



# PETER FAULTLESS

TO HIS

BROTHER SIMON,

TALES OF NIGHT,

IN RHYME,

AND

OTHER POEMS.

*Elizabeth Elliott*

---

BY

THE AUTHOR OF NIGHT.

---

EDINBURGH:

PRINTED FOR ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE & CO. EDINBURGH;  
AND HURST, ROBINSON, & CO. CHEAPSIDE, LONDON.

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1820.

PR 4699

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W. L. Shoemaker

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# PETER FAULTLESS

TO

HIS BROTHER SIMON.

---

— Genus irritabile vatum.

HORACE.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

THE Monthly Reviewers (we are informed by themselves) hailed with applause Lord Byron's first appearance as an author. They certainly may be allowed to boast of such an inadvertency; and, while they make their praise the prelude to insult, they may endeavour to account to themselves for their unaccountable blunder, by fancying his Lordship bears some resemblance to their idols.

“ In his *Corsair*, he” (Lord Byron) “ approaches Pope, and even Dryden; but can never sustain the parallel!” See *Monthly Review for July 1819*, page 311.

Simon the Faultless is not (as the above quotation may sufficiently prove) an imaginary personage. I address a living pedant, and in the individual ex-

hibit the species. Unable to perceive merit in any British poet since Pope, and himself a most inveterate syllable-weigher and finger-counter, Simon might pass for a certain Review personified. The expence of engraving prevented me from exhibiting a print of him, by way of frontispiece to this volume. The drawing was taken in a happy moment. Simon was seated on the works of Milton and Shakespeare, and almost bursting with indignation, while in the act of suspending aloft, in opposite scales, the delinquent words “ shone” and “ throne ;” and on the table before him lay a rule, a pair of compasses, the instrument which he calls a word-clipper, and that invaluable treatise, the ancient finger-and-thumb method of counting ten. Should my book be well received, I may be encouraged to publish the print separately, as an illustration of the epistle.

# PETER FAULTLESS

TO

HIS BROTHER SIMON.

---

THOU ablest scribbler in our chaste Review ;  
Who, darning old thoughts, mak'st them pass for new !  
Still lash the imps who try, nor try in vain,  
To wake the muses of Eliza's reign ;  
Call Scott " a croaker," Southey " an old woman,"  
Byron half god, half log, a thing uncommon.  
Consistent most in inconsistency,  
Be still the bigot's, slave's apology,  
The judge, the law, of poets, and of song,  
Simon the Faultless, always in the wrong,

Drivel of drivel, vapid in th' excess,  
And all pretension, tho' pretensionless.  
Behold no heav'n in Shakespeare's fretted sky ;  
Nor ev'n deplore with blushes, or a sigh,  
The fate that gave the gate of bliss to thee,  
Made thee Saint Peter, but denied the key !

Oh ! much miscall'd the synonyme of slander,  
And quite as fam'd for genius as for candour !  
Thou, on whose forehead sapience, rooted well,  
Grows, like the solemn horn, invisible !  
Terror of Tyros ! here transcrib'd, I send  
The little ode which, yesterday, I penn'd.



## ODE TO CHOPP'D CABBAGE AND DARK- NESS TANGIBLE.

“ CHOPP'D Cabbage ! food for destin'd author meet !  
All hail, Chopp'd Cabbage ! for thy juice is sweet ;

Fed, erst, by thee, we utter truths divine, (1)  
And, soft as cabbage boil'd, th' unmeaning line,  
While Simon's prose sounds just like verse of mine!  
Hail, gloom in light ! let hope before thee melt ;  
And long may Simon make his darkness felt."

What think'st thou of it ? tell me by the post :  
My wife likes all my odes, but this the most.  
That it hath meaning thou wilt quickly see,  
For sweetly it alludes to thee and me.  
Curse on long poems ! dull, heroic stuff !  
Ten lines, at once, are excellence enough ;  
And know, each tedious canto-weaving churl,  
A little ode is Cleopatra's pearl.  
What, though despised ? the tiny strains we prize  
Are strains immortal—in their author's eyes ;  
Not the full flower on each rank soil that grows,  
But gem-like petals of the classic rose ;  
Or, cast by rapid genius from behind,  
His sweetest winglets of poetic wind.  
Sweet, to read rhyme with emulation's tingle !  
More sweet, the prosier's languish into jingle !

Most sweet, to die of Liliputian lay,  
In ecstasies of epigram, away !  
Vain dreamer, who expects we will, or can,  
Dissect his tedious incidents and plan !  
Unread his book, if read, not understood,  
To praise, or blame in generals, is good.  
An epic insult cannot be forgiven !  
What then ? a sonnet is a little heaven,  
The bard's Elysium, and the critic's too :  
Measured with ease, in each dimension true.  
It asks no skill—the *eye* can comprehend it ;  
Prais'd, without risk—if faultless, who can mend it ?  
But ere thou splash with censure, or applause,  
Elaborate Epic, or high Drama—pause.  
Ask if the crowd receive the numbers well ?  
Ask if the first edition promptly sell ?  
If beaux admire and buy it in a trice,  
As every dunce did Milton's Paradise ?  
Then tremble at the uncertain deep no more,  
But launch thy bark with safety from the shore ;  
Then read a page, to understand a volume,  
And columns fill with grubs, on half a column.

Greatly, like thee, in trifles I delight,  
Songs, chaste as those thou lov'st to praise, I write,  
Like thee, for dull monotony I plead,  
And what was poorly written, vilely read ;  
And long to lounge with coxcombs now and then,  
And nonsense humbly lisp to childish men,  
Who sing by rule, and safely praise by rote,  
And idolize the fashion of a coat.  
I, too, with all the critic's genuine spirit,  
Would rather damn, than read a work of merit ;  
Hear the poor poet howl to all his pain,  
And laugh to see him rant and rave in vain,  
Write satires on us, and be damn'd again ;  
For nobler 'tis, and easier, to excel  
In slandering basely, than in writing well,  
And bliss to mark the pangs of bard in critic's hell.

Thou more than Johnson, in verbosity,  
Than Pope in smoothness ! who shall vie with thee ?  
Weave verse, without or merit, or defect,  
And write the Babylonish dialect ?

Richly, in scraps of sad translation, flows  
The thick molasses of thy rhyming prose,  
Darkening our sage Review, that all may see  
No poet living can translate, but thee ;  
And still I wonder, (as, at length, I tell thee,)  
The murder'd ancients never rose to fell thee.  
But who, like thee, infallible in lies,  
Can slander genius, alias criticise ?  
Let malice say (for what can malice less ?)  
That, in our censure, we our fear express,  
Poor mediocrity's affrighted yell,  
And writhing envy's hiss, that startles hell.  
Shalt thou, for taunts, the scourge, thy hope below,  
And, with the scourge, thy very soul forego ?  
Tithe of the tenth part of a tailor's ! No.

Classic like thee, though less profound than thou,  
Snarl'd once Ben Jonson ; but who heeds him now  
Less learn'd the Caliban that Shakespeare drew ;  
But Ben, all envy, prov'd the portrait true.  
Grinning, he rail'd, and gasp'd for brains and breath ;  
But Shakespeare smil'd, and still fools read Macbeth.

Then, Simon, droop not thou! With spleen elate,  
Vent all thou hast, and leave th' effect to fate.  
Let irony applaud thy depth, thy skill;  
Let no fool equal thee in writing ill;  
Curtail'd in soul, let pedantry suffice;  
Oppose to truth thy shield of prejudice;  
Excel even Darwin in the Fudge sublime;  
Then print critiques that emulate my rhyme;  
And pour the oil of eulogy on those  
Whose lofty verses ape thy lifeless prose.  
Though Scott shall live, like sin in deathless fire,  
And future Byrons read him, and admire;  
A better doom than Ben's awaits thy lies,  
If thee oblivion's self shall patronize.

Should some plain rustic, fac'd with impudence,  
Bid thee translate thy jargon into sense;  
Hard is the task (and do not thou begin it)  
To write no meaning, and find meaning in it.  
Should some sly school-boy, o'er his grammar squat-  
ting,  
Ask, "Who was't taught thee, what he knew not,  
Latin?"

Say, that thy patron paid, and paid enough,  
To make a prodigy of stubborn stuff.

“What are thy powers?” should some prick’d poet  
cry;

Say, fudge and Latin *all* thy wants supply;  
Say, quoted Latin, (well misunderstood,)  
Not English,—though we’d write it if we could;  
(But this apart,—the vulgar must not know it;  
Oh, tell it not in Gath, thou fear’d of poet!)

Say, quoted Latin proves thy learned pains,  
And misapplied, *atones* for lack of brains;  
Latin, which taught Demosthenes to speak, (2)  
And made old Homer write so well—in Greek.  
Should sceptics still, with intellects awry,  
Presume to doubt thy learned stupidity,  
Chop from thy solid sconce a fragment ample,  
And, by the waggon, send the ponderous sample,  
(As curious folks might do by th’ Sheffield air,)  
And make the unbelievers gasp and stare.

And should the times grow worse, as some expect,  
Pack sundry parcels of thine intellect,

Swear that Bœotia's densest can't excel it,  
Call't "mist of mind," and in Newfoundland sell it;  
For there the happy people feed on vapour,  
Just like thy readers,—but they save their paper.

Mute hears conceit, while self and folly teach :  
Bigots preach pride, and *practise* what they preach :  
So, like spoil'd children, genuine critics still (3)  
Adore their own dear petulance of will.  
In music, all who can count eight are singers ;  
So, all are poets who can count their fingers.  
Yet, dread and shun the sin of bastard rhyme,  
Where "shone," with "throne," is vilely made to  
chime ; (4)  
For still such coupling shall be deem'd by me  
Rank crambo, whoredom, and adultery.  
Write thou by th' compass, and th' unerring string,  
Sweet strains, that we, who cannot read, may sing.  
Let not *thy* line, like drunken wight perplex'd,  
In reeling errors, run into the next.  
Seize thou each wordy truant by the throat,  
Pass thou thy *five feet rule* o'er every thought ;

And bid reviewing knights, where'er they go,  
Hang all but *our* firm, Epigram and Co.  
Nor stop thou there, but write what none else may,  
An epic in acrostics, or a play !  
With fist of wool, strike sense, the smiler, dumb ;  
Dire difficulties make, and overcome,  
Not to poor purpose, but to none at all ;  
Call faultless that which Crabbe would senseless call ;  
Cram thy bless'd song with labour'd stuff to fulness,  
And be, at least, *original* in dulness.  
So shall our perfect art, in its result,  
Be best amusement for the babe adult.  
So shall sage Sing-song bend th' adoring knee,  
And Titum, Tumti, Tweedle-dum, to thee,  
Grand metropolitan of Tweedle-dee !  
So shall the dread, oh, Simon, of thy shears  
Make each true poet loath to show his ears.  
So, hungry as a rat, shall genius prowl,  
And at thy line, thy rule, thy compass growl ;  
Yet scorn, tho' lean as death, and fed on hope,  
To ape the mimic of the apes of Pope,  
And boast of bondage. In the crowded fair,  
So shall the pedlar clothe his honour'd ware

In lawn Parnassian ; and the chandler see  
His counter shagg'd with shades of poesy—  
Immortal ! If the fates no shop-fiend move  
To rend, with stormy hand, the Heliconian grove.

Far from the white man's frown, to western skies  
The vanquish'd native of Columbia flies,  
And, flying, hears, amid the sunless brake,  
His father's spirits, in each hissing snake,  
Taunt their degenerate offspring ! On his soul,  
Black in the torrent's growling depth they scowl ;  
Invoke the storms, on every mountain's brow,  
To chill him with the forest-wail of woe ;  
Flap o'er his eyes the night-bird's ominous pinion,  
And, viewless, chase the desert's frightened minion ;  
Or, gamboling with the vollied rain in ire,  
Deride him with their dreadful laugh of fire,  
Shout in the voice of the contending cloud,  
Howl to his heart, and smite their hands aloud.  
Shame on his temples pales the raven's wing :  
He lies him down upon the serpent's sting,

No more to feel it ! and the white man's child  
Crops on his grave the floweret of the wild.  
Thus, high-soul'd Genius, vanquish'd in the strife  
With Envy's shield of lead, and viewless knife,  
Flies far, and pines aloof, but scorns to weep.  
He calls no more his " spirits from the deep ;"  
Diseas'd in soul, he dreads to meet the morn,  
And those who pity seem to him to scorn.  
Vainly in woods of deepest shade he lingers ;  
The very bushes seem to count their fingers,  
Emptiness calls for rhyme in every breeze,  
And tortured syllables seem to leaf the trees.  
He rushes to thy dreamless bed, Despair !  
But Malice, with the stake, shall find him there,  
And deep transfix him in unhallow'd clay :  
The fools he scorn'd shall drag his faults to day,  
Gloat on his woes, till rancour hath her fill,  
And, true to baseness, mangle whom they kill.

Let all, who trash and Cumberland admire, (5)  
Condemn thy censure, and call folly fire ;

To letter'd woe her tear let pity pay,  
Dull Franklin (6) praise harsh Cowper's (7) taste-  
less lay,  
And genius, and the bleeding heart, deplore,  
O'er Kirk White's (8) dust, the flower that blooms  
no more.

But still ply thou the finger-counting trade ;  
Be still of sense and scoundrel wit afraid ;  
Still curse the ravings of the Avonian Seer,  
And all that Milton lov'd—the style severe,  
The iron verse, with happiest labour wrought,  
The verbal strength that girds the might of thought.  
Still, when thou writ'st, write nonsense ! smooth and fine,  
In wiry length, drawl out the empty line ;  
For brew we flat blank verse, or dulcet rhyme,  
The sterling senseless is the true sublime.  
Then (by thy scull, I swear !) our stuff is good ;  
And damn'd be he whose verse is understood !  
Damn'd to be read ! his snowy couplets stain'd,  
And every page with sweaty thumbs profan'd ;  
While not an eye, with envious leer malign,  
Presumes to glance on page of thine, or mine.

Proud may we be to sleep "in virgin sheets!"  
Even Talma spouts Racine to empty seats;  
In France itself the Faultless loses ground;  
All fly the perfect Drama's drowsy sound;  
And, while spoil'd Shakespeare pleases in Voltaire,  
Boileau reposes with the things which were.

Thou tyrant Dwarf! who, hating still the tall,  
Would'st to thy paltry standard level all!  
Malignant instinct of pedantic dulness,  
That feed'st on merit's pangs, and cram'st to fulness!  
Swell to the Mammoth's bulk thy worshipp'd mouse,  
And bid the lion deify a louse.  
What! shall th' undazzl'd eagle from on high  
Implore the bat to lead him thro' the sky?  
What! shall our guides be blinder than the blind?  
Must strength adore thine impotence of mind?  
Aye, "dash Apollo from his throne of light!"  
And let the hunch-back'd cripple, letter'd spite,  
Shuffling and puff'd, as frog in fable big,  
Place there a monkey in a periwig,

To snarl, and peep thro' glass at button-hole,  
And whisk his sapient tail, in sign of soul.  
Fly, fly to Thule, ere we singe thy wings,  
Fly, Scott, and rest with unremember'd kings!  
Hide, hide thee, Southey, in some savage wild,  
And spout to trees thine "English undefil'd!"  
Crabbe, burn thy rules, thy brains—unlearn thy  
trade;

Paint views for tea-pots, without light or shade!  
Prais'd, dreaded Childe! some rhyming farce produce,  
And barter Hippocrene for turnip-juice!  
Mend, Harold, mend, thou heretic in disguise!  
Mend, or consent to lose thy ears and eyes!  
Lo, genius falls, and falls to rise no more!  
His day Aurelian, and its pomp, are o'er:  
Deep plung'd in darkness, who shall heed his pain,  
Who mark the smile of his sublime disdain?  
Art thou, too, fall'n—immortal and divine,—  
Thou only giant who could'st vanquish time?  
No—not Bœotia's mist, not envy's shade,  
Not zealous Simon's diuretic aid,

Can quench thy torch, or hide, or dim its ray,  
The star that never sets of mental day.  
There needs no angel th' uncontroll'd to free,  
No resurrection, deathless life, to thee !

Is there a rhymster, musical as Pope,  
A wholesale dealer in magnific trope,  
Proud stiffest crambo's buckram'd Nash to be,  
At war with grammar, but at peace with thee,  
Tho' much 'twould pose the sovereign of pretence  
To cull from half his stanzas six of sense ? (9.)  
Is there a sage of titum-tumti skill  
Who, writing little, writes that little ill,  
(Sweet school-boy jingle, meaningless as sweet,  
Chaste thoughtlets, sinless as a virgin sheet,)  
And steeps in numbers pure as scentless rose  
The wond'rous things which gossips say in prose,  
To form with labour, in his tranquil rabies,  
A lullaby for intellectual babies ?  
Them shall our very hate of genius raise  
To one hour's long eternity of praise,

Consistent folly laud them to the sky,  
And malice growl applause, lest envy die.  
When moral essays, sermons spoil'd with rhyme,  
And back'd by Byron, fail to vanquish time ;  
When tuneful memory sleeps with tuneful hope ;  
Shall Scott, Crabbe, Southey, dare with fate to cope ?

Is there a poet, whose congenial mind  
Young Milton would have chos'n from all mankind?  
And can that poet flatter in his lay  
The literary bigots of the day,  
And taunt with thankless sneer the men of might  
Whose hands unbarr'd for him " the gates of light ?"  
Lo, virtue weeps o'er self-degraded worth !  
Lo, kindred bards, the deathless of the earth,  
Tremble with rage and grief in every limb,  
And envy dulness, to be unlike him,  
Compell'd to see, in agony and scorn,  
The courser with the eyelids of the morn,  
The fire-wing'd courser, stoop so meanly low,  
Ev'n from Olympus, to salute a crow !

But we—on talents' golden deeds severe,—  
Commend his wond'rous fault, in wond'ring fear ;  
Swear that he far the northern Bear surpasses,  
And dub him almost equal to our asses ;  
Yet inly dread the thunder of his mane,  
And curse his deviations from our lane,  
And humbly bid him, if he would excel,  
Respect its dear twin fences, trimm'd so well.

All hail to him, whose thoughts are as the wind  
Free and unchainable,—the man whose mind  
Glows like his heart, and shines instinct with light !  
Let him review the work which he could write.  
Hard is the task, and hourly harder, too,  
To write a book in style and matter new,  
Where sense and fancy are in splendour blent,  
At once original and excellent.  
But if to hunt for flaws, to merit blind,  
Requires perfection, too, of other kind,  
Grave folly, the ridiculous by rule,  
And basest spleen, ne'er found but in a fool ;

What wonder, if thy zealous lash assail'd  
Cowper's first song, and for a time prevail'd ?  
What wonder, if thou try, so bravely well,  
To crush young genius bursting from the shell,  
Sure that the noble bird, once plum'd and freed,  
Would soar, and spurn thy malice and thy creed ?  
What wonder, if—since cowards loudest boast,  
And he who least deserves still claims the most—  
Each prosing grandmamma, each sage old woman,  
(Female or male,) each broken-knee'd and common  
Slave of the monthly press, should rail to live ?  
Insolence is the fool's prerogative.  
Proud of that art which in the dunce is nature,  
Critic and dunce ! conceit dilates his stature.  
The very ease with which he gropes his way,  
The ardour of the dupes who flock to pay  
Gold for his dross, the frequent fractured head  
Of thin-scull'd genius fell'd with fist of lead,  
Make him mistake for truth the witticism,  
That want of sense and shame is criticism.  
His cap and crown, pedantic arrogance,  
Blind as the mole in letter'd ignorance,

Vain as the Gropius of some modern Vandal,  
Or queen of gossips taking tea and scandal,  
He boasts his mean inglorious victories,  
He boasts the very dulness of his lies.  
Owl-eyed to splendour, eagle-ey'd to spy  
Spots on the disk of glory, Envy's eye  
Admires no loveliness, beholds no worth ;  
Her soul is darkness, for her brain is earth :  
No joy she knows, but in another's smart ;  
No God she worships, but her own black heart.  
Hell dreads her coming, with erected hair,  
For, envy absent, 'tis Elysium there !  
No fiend, o'er fiery broth, with hollow eye,  
Pines to behold his neighbour's brimstone pye ;  
No sparkless devil damns, in scribbling ire,  
The happier, hotter devil's pen of fire ;  
But Satan, pleas'd, resigns his earthly throne,  
And swears our monthly hell exceeds his own  
In dulness, darkness—every thing, but light :  
Down, zealous Simon, set his dunces right !  
Run, mother Ph——ps, teach his worship spite !

Back to that isle, the banish'd maids of song  
Let Southey lead, with stripling hand, along.  
Struck by th' assassin's blow, let genius come, (10)  
Knock at his heart, and find her friend at home,  
From her pierc'd brain to draw th' envenom'd steel,  
And all but cure the wound which death must heal.  
Let him, with Spenser's mastery, and his own,  
Paint Madoc, David, Conrade, Rhoderic, Joan;  
Wild Laila, fiction's cherub; in her sire  
Evil, that *will* not hope; in Julian's ire,  
Faith wounded, trampling glory in the dust,  
Arm'd vengeance, almost in rebellion just;  
What in Florinda? beauty, sorrow, worth,  
A suffering angel, in the garb of earth.  
Let him to light drag Hades; bid the deep,  
Reserv'd for him, Fate's awful secrets keep;  
And (wildest spirit, on the strongest wing)  
Soar sightless heights, a matchless wreath to bring  
From that bright heav'n, where none but he durst  
soar,  
And never flower was snatch'd for truth before.

Triumphant o'er the ear-offending tone,  
Sublimely mournful, let Sheaf's bard, (11) alone,  
Attain in rhyme great Shakespeare's rhymeless ease,  
The pleasing sweet that never fails to please.  
Tearing from want's dread woes the rags and all,  
Let Crabbe the eye of startled ease appal,  
Obtrude a gorgon on his dream of bliss,  
And show poor human nature as it is.  
Let Erin's child produce his wond'rous gem,  
And set the emerald in her diadem,  
That she, unrivall'd in her sons before,  
May strike ev'n envy silent, bless'd with Moore.  
What second Shakespeare, faultless without plan,  
Creates anew the wond'rous Proteus, Man?  
Who steals from Heav'n a pencil wildly true?  
Scott, Scott alone, can draw as Shakespeare drew,  
Dip the heath's bell in immortality,  
Bid landscapes bloom in hues that cannot die,  
Paint battle's rage, while awe his hand controls,  
And sketch the surge of horror as it rolls;  
Or, give the wild weird sisters' attributes  
To her whose wildness well such horror suits,

More dire than they who made their presence—air,  
Who seem'd not of the earth, and yet were there.  
Let Byron, in his hurried line, condense  
“ Impassion'd music,” energy, and sense,  
And proudly reign, with misanthropic scowl,  
Lord of the realms of pathos and of soul ;  
Or snatch from Churchill's urn, with dreadful hand,  
Resistless satire's asp, and torturing brand ;  
Or play at boyhood, with a seraph's smile,  
Drink on love's lip the sweetness, with the guile,  
Win wisdom's heart, by praising her darn'd hose,  
And, laughing, rip her garment, in the close.  
What, tho' their strains, with more than magic thrall,  
Charm the great vulgar, and enchant the small ?  
Where are the feet which drowsy measures keep ?  
Where is the music of poetic sleep ?  
Let man and maid, in praise and price, enhance  
The crambo novel, and the rhym'd romance ;  
While man and maid their merits stale discuss,  
They leave the rest to—Dulness, and to us.  
What need of mental light, and hues divine,  
To please an eyeless intellect, like thine ?

Eunuch in soul, and slave amid the free !  
Still squeak thine exultation such to be,  
That all the sons of jingle, as they pass,  
May bless the half-bray of their viewless ass,  
And, cursing sense, tho' by her scorn forgiv'n,  
Ascend, in thought, thy ears, and reach their heav'n.  
Proud of disgrace, as Dandies of their stays,  
On want of candour build thy claim to praise ;  
Untried, condemn ; create the fault unfound ;  
Invoke the gloom ; with unseen dagger wound ;  
Damn into fame the merit that we hate ;  
With laugh'd at plaudits, plume each witling's pate ;  
And, with no meaning, since 'tis all thou hast, (12)  
Patch Latin nonsense on thine English fast,  
As beggary, strutting in her best attire,  
Sports rags for lace, and bids the world admire.  
Why should not lacquer'd ware for genuine pass ?  
Though not Corinthian, Simon, thou art brass.  
But say, when wilt thou, least a slave in rhyme,  
Convert to crambo Young's unrhym'd sublime ?  
Ape meanly him, whose famine flatter'd vice,  
And tag, once more, the lay of Paradise ?

Regretted days! when causes vile combin'd  
To Frenchify the genuine British mind!  
No wight, to whom the soul of song was giv'n,  
Could then for gold, or brass, sell "light from  
Heaven;"

But pining merit, poorest of the poor,  
Saw every spaniel thrive, and every whore;  
Most prais'd was he who best could shake his chains,  
And he wrote best who had most lack of brains;  
While scribblers fam'd, on Eden's poet frown'd,  
And it was glory to be unrenown'd.  
Go, call the dead, call Dryden from his urn,  
Go, bid the rhyming dramatist return!  
Go, wake the dust of Waller, and expose  
To th' opiate snuff each true poetic nose!  
Come bonds again, with ribald rhyme, along!  
And reproscribe—not Milton, but his song.

Once, blundering into fairness, wast thou known  
(Wond'rous event!) to blush, and once alone:  
Amaz'd, asham'd, thou stard'st, like waking Timon,  
And I, too, stared aghast, and knew not Simon!

Back sank thy soul into its vapoury trance ;  
And, o'er the desert of thy countenance,  
(That isleless sea, without or wave, or coast,)  
Truth sought a gleam of sense, and wander'd lost.  
But fate consol'd thee ; for thy curs'd applause  
Was deep damnation to the author's cause :  
Tho' dipp'd in Heav'n, his song, unsold, unsought,  
Was deem'd some faultless nothing good for nought ;  
And, had not Johnstone for pale merit carv'd,  
Damn'd by thy praise, even Mickle might have starv'd.

Bless'd were the times, when vengeance fed on fire,  
And Smithfield saw Religion's fools expire !  
We ne'er, alas ! such bright revenge may take,  
And burn the bugbear, Genius, at the stake ;  
Or bid the heretic poets of the nation  
Roar, in legitimate rhyme, their recantation !  
But, should thy patron sage again be sent  
To sit (his proper place) in Parliament,  
Bid him, with all thy eloquence, propose  
(Yet slyly, at the important session's close)

A law, which must, and shall be then decreed—  
To flay whoever laughs at this our creed :  
“ Fudge, ever empty, and yet ever full,  
“ ’Mid change unchang’d, inerrable, and dull,  
“ Fast bound to nonsense, cannot, will not budge,  
“ But makes Fate choice, and is, and shall be Fudge.  
“ Perfection is emasculated song ;  
“ Fudge is perfection : right, whoe’er is wrong,  
“ We, crown’d with bells, the Fudge-presiding powers  
“ Are, and will be ; and no Fudge equals ours.”

Vile is the work, and written by a fool,  
That dares to deviate from our classic rule ;  
Tame, if not turgid ; if blank verse, not rhyme ;  
Bombast and German horror, if sublime.  
So (deeming Newton’s merit a pretence) (13)  
Our cousin calls his nonsense common sense,  
Converts the sun to ice, by wordy spell,  
And makes cold Saturn hot as blazing hell ; (14)  
Or (homager of lawless conquest) pays  
The cant of freedom in a tyrant’s praise,

Transforming, with his necromantic pen,  
The prince of despots into th' first of men.  
Oh, had the freeborn Briton in his heart  
His ponderous *ESSAYS* sent to Bonaparte,  
(Dire ammunition !) when th' invading foes  
Fir'd insolent squibs beneath th' imperial nose,  
Blucher, appall'd, had fled from Gallic ground,  
And Congreve's rockets been excell'd—in sound !  
Greatest of sage fudgeosophers are we,  
But Dickey is the greatest of us three.  
To all who know thy powers, thy powers are known,  
And every dunce might take them for his own ;  
We both write rhyme in which no discord jars ;  
But Dickey plays the devil with the *stars* !  
All this thou know'st—But, ah, my light decays,  
Emblem of man's frail trust, and winged days !—  
Oh, what is stable in this world of change ?  
Insects of care ! bards, kings—even critics, range  
From flower to weed, and sport their little hour,  
As sports the moth, air's gem, on flying flower  
O'er hyacinthine odours, passion-borne, \*  
On wings of splendour, rivalling the morn !

To-morrow kills the deathless of to-day !  
What will th' inerrable in crambo say,  
When Pope neglected, like dead Pug, or Pero,  
The Dunciad's author, lives but in its hero ?  
How will they redden, and almost with shame,  
To hear the voice of time and truth proclaim  
One scene in Cibber, Manuel's weeping laughter,  
Worth Pope, Pope's mimics, and their apes hereafter ?  
Lays, that with our immortal lays might vie,  
Die in a day, a brief eternity ;  
Die, tho' the Monthly praise with all his breath ;  
Die—for our praise is everlasting death !  
Vainly in ought vain mortals put their trust ;  
Ev'n folly's granite turns, at last, to dust ;  
States rise to fall ; the very angels fell ;  
And Priestley says the fire's extinct in hell !  
Thou, Simon, art the sole infallible.  
And should'st thou tire, best scholar in thy school,  
Of blowing the "*posterior trump*" by rule ;  
Or praise a wit ; or fail to praise a fool ;  
Or write blank verse ; or, ere thou damn it, read ;  
Or wisely blame ; or, blam'd with candour, heed ;

Or quote, and understand ; or cease to scribble  
 The only genuine unintelligible ;  
 Or be no more half learned, tho' an ass ;  
 Phillips himself may blush at his own brass !—  
 Almost in darkness ?—I must cease to write,  
 And wish thee (not perchance a last) good night !  
 Remaining still (what fisher ever caught less ?)  
 Fame's angler thin, thy brother,

PETER FAULTLESS.

### POSTSCRIPT.

\* None but a loveless critic, old and dry,  
 Would blame this young word, passion-borne ; for I  
 By it allude to sweet Miss Butterfly,  
 The film-capp'd damsel, with the sun-beam shawl,  
 Master Moth's sweetheart.—Bless me, how I scrawl !  
 When half asleep, one scarce can write at all.  
 Line running into line—see, Simon, see !  
 “ Out of all plumb !” and triplets—can it be ?  
 Three hideous triplets in a row ? Lord—three !

## NOTES TO THE EPISTLE.

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(1) *Fed, erst, by thee, we utter truths divine.*

The principal writers in a certain Review, (remarkable for its baby-strictures on poetry,) are persons who, unable to count their fingers, have learned a little *arithmetic*, with a view to criticism, idleness, and the ministry. The leading tenet of those oracles is, that a string of epigrams is an epic poem, provided always, that not one line run into another, and that the second line of each couplet be a mere echo of the first, or, that it be at least stuffed with unmeaning epithets.

### Examples of the Faultless.

*See Pan with flocks, with fruits Pomona crown'd,  
And blushing Flora paints th' enamell'd ground.*

*Thick, undistinguished plumes together throng,  
Shield press'd on shield, and man drove man along.*

Thus vulgarized by Cowper.

*Shield, helmet, man, press'd helmet, man, and shield.*

*High on his helm celestial lightnings play,*

*His beamy shield emits a living ray ;*

*Th' unweari'd blaze incessant streams supplies,*

*Like the red star that fires autumnal skies.*

Δαΐέ οἱ ἐκ κόρυθός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάρμαπον πῶρ

Ἄστέρ' ὀπωρινῷ ἐναλίγκιον, &c.

*See the commencement of the fifth Iliad.*

(2) *Latin, which taught Demosthenes to speak,*

*And made old Homer write so well—in Greek.*

As the divine Plato, and the ladies of the Athenian Billingsgate, must have spoken the same language, it is a favourite opinion with Simon, that the fish eaten by the ancient Greeks must have greatly excelled in flavour all barbarian, and all modern fish, on account of its having been cried in pure Greek.

(3) *So, like spoil'd children, genuine critics still*

*Adore their own dear petulance of will.*

Simon was scarcely ever known to praise a poem of merit, until *after* the author had succeeded with the public ; but not a single work, particularly remarkable for its faultless stupidity, has escaped the damnation of his applause.

And I looked back, and inquired, “ Where are all those books which Infallibility hath praised ? ” And Echo answered, “ Where ? ”

- (4) *Where "shone," with "throne," is vilely made to chime.*

See *Monthly Review for August 1818*, p. 358.

- (5) *Let all, who trash and Cumberland admire,  
Condemn thy censure.—*

Richard Cumberland, although a true poet, was once in a fair way of becoming fat, having his larder actually stored with a ham, two fowls, &c. Unhappily, Simon, chancing to pass by, saw those good things through the window, and, in an agony of envious rage, drew from his enormous breeches a squirt, and, stooping and hutching up his hinderments, with closed teeth, bended knees, and a sudden jerk, ejected into the bard's pantry a quantity of saline fluid, liquorifying all his eatables, to the infinite disgust of poor Cumberland, and equally to the amusement of the spectators, who, one and all, admired Simon's adroitness in experimental philosophy.

- (6) *Dull Franklin.—*

One Benjamin Franklin, who had the brainless audacity to praise Cowper's first publication, in contempt of Simon's damnatory sentence.

- (7) *—harsh Cowper's tasteless lay.*

William Cowper, author of *The Task*, whom Simon (expecting no resistance) struck at with his compasses, in such valiant haste, that

"He nigh-hand cowpit wi' his hurry." BURNS.

(8) *O'er Kirk White's dust.*——

Henry Kirk White, shot at by Simon, and killed with a ball of sponge.

(9) *At war with grammar.*——

See Campbell's *Gertrude of Wyoming*. I do not mean to deny, that the poets here alluded to have merit, but to assert, that their merit has been infinitely overrated, and that it is most preposterous to elevate mere essays in rhyme above works of invention, which have required the exertion of every power of the highest minds.

*And taunt with thankless sneer.*——

We have many imitations of the Corsair, but only one (Manfred) of Thalaba, "the rival of Tom Thumb." How is this, Lara?

(10) *Struck by th' assassin's blow, let genius come.*

See the "*Remains of Henry Kirk White*," edited by Mr Southey.

(11) —— *The bard of Sheaf, alone.*

James Montgomery, author of *The Wanderer of Switzerland*, &c.

(12) *And, with no meaning, since 'tis all thou hast,  
Patch Latin nonsense on thine English—.*

The vanity of the Monthly Reviewers, displayed in their fondness for interlarding their compositions with

quotations from the Latin, &c. would be ridiculous in a Tyro of the university writing to his friends. In all works addressed to the general reader, such quotations are insults, and whatever may be their meaning, "pedantic coxcomb" is the usual, and it is a very good translation of them generally. The acquirement of the dead languages is useful to the student, because it gives him a habit of attention; and what would offend in English, may be expressed in Latin. But the treasures of ancient literature are accessible (to the learned and the unlearned) in good translations; and "of all cants that are canted in this canting world," the cant of learning is the most disgusting. To such a height of extravagance had this foppish affectation arrived in the decline of Roman liberty, that each Simon Faultless of the day interwove patches of Greek into the motley texture of his prose or verse. This incongruity did not escape the powerful ridicule of Horace; and Cicero chose rather to employ a circumlocution, than disgrace the powers of his own language, by having recourse to foreign aid. "Dicam si potero Latiné; scis enim me Græcé loqui in Latino sermone non solere." *Tusc. Disp. I. 3.*

(13) *So (deeming Newton's merit a pretence)*

*Our cousin calls his nonsense common sense.*

See certain unsurpassables in the *Monthly Magazine*, under the signature of *Common Sense*. The author, holding Sir Isaac in the utmost contempt, is, of course, a great

fudgeosopher. But he is also a critic ; and he descants on the writings of others, as if they were his own sublime speculations on “ pressure,” making frequent use of the word “ bombast,” with a laughable unconsciousness of its application to himself, and forgetting that he has established a sort of monopoly of the article. In his political notions he is not remarkably original ; and, alas ! he will, perhaps, never be alone in the opinion, that “ great man,” and “ great cut-throat,” are terms of equivalent signification.

(14) *And makes cold Saturn hot as blazing hell.*

Sir Richard has demonstrated, that, as the “ motion” is greatest at the circumference, and least at the centre of a revolving wheel, the sun must be a body of ice, and the planet Saturn eight hundred million and three times hotter than lightning ! For the established vocabulary of astronomy he has substituted his own. Instead of the terms “ attraction” and “ repulsion,” he writes “ motion,” and “ all fools but me.” He has discovered that *motion* is the *cause* of the universe, which he proves by the fact, that *snorting* is the *cause* of his *nose*. Poor Newton ! what a deplorable destiny is thine ! after wielding worlds, to be felled by a turnip.

# TALES OF NIGHT,

IN RHYME.

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————— Oh ! mysterious Night,  
Thou art not silent ! many tongues hast thou.

MISS BAILLIE.

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## PREFACE.

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WHEN I published the first part of *Night*, it was my intention to complete the poem in three successive parts, of four books each ; but I was afterwards advised, by a person learned in the trade, to write in rhyme, and choose another title. With the utmost reluctance I complied. Two of the tales in this volume formed no part of my original design : they were written, perhaps, in despite of nature and my stars, but certainly in compliance with the advice of my learned friend.

I like the heroic couplet, when it is applied (as, with admirable judgment, by Pope) to suitable subjects. In writing the *Tales of Night* in irregular rhyme, I have attempted a task of some danger. Be it said, with all deference to the infallibility of Si-

mon the Faultless, that thoughts comparatively trivial will support themselves in the regular couplet ; and I am by no means sure, that I can *afford* to write in rhyme with somewhat of the freedom of blank verse.

Night was written under great depression of mind, in sorrow and despondency. I thank those critics who have spoken of it with candour, nor ought I, perhaps, to be sorry that it has enabled those literary bigots, the Monthly Reviewers, (whose sapient liberality, connected, as it is, with the names of Cowper and Kirk White, will be immortal,) to write a masterpiece of criticism, in which they have excelled themselves. Perhaps no publication is less calculated to excite notice than a volume of poetry by an unknown author ; and, with their usual courage and judgment, they have attacked my supposed helplessness. In as much as their attack may affect the sale of my book, I have certain uncomfortable reasons for wishing it had not been made ; for my purse is pathetically poetical ; but on no other account is it of the least importance. On all subjects of poetry, the Monthly Reviewers are of less than no authority. They are the men-milliners of literature. Critics by courtesy or prescription, their ir-

reversible laws have been contemned in our day, by authors whose celebrity has reached the extremities of the earth ; authors, compared with whom, the Gods of their idolatry are children in intellect. Hence, the yell of their envy and despair is, at once, ridiculous and pathetic. Yet (for I would not resemble them in any thing) let me be just even to the nameless oracles of petulance and prejudice, although they would extinguish, at once, a schismatic bardling, who has fed on hope and tears, until he is become almost as poor and lean as their own criticisms on poetry. I allow them the merit of which, perhaps, they are most proud ; and truth demands the acknowledgment, that, in the genuine virtues of the cruel coward, their infallibility is unquestionable. Let them, then, still howl forth their dread of merit, if to do so can alleviate, in any degree, the anguish of their deplorable and hopeless disease. Always anxious to avoid hostility, and equally ready to repel aggression, I will impress the precept upon the minds of my children, never to shrink from the enmity of persons whom God, in his inscrutable wisdom, has cursed with minds capable only of evil perception, and hearts cadaverous and putrid in vitality. When a creature, without name, home, character, intellect, or six-

pence,\* (I beg pardon of decorum, but language sinks beneath the expression of the vileness to which I allude,) when such a reptile, after turning over, at the publisher's counter, the title of a book, and reading a line or two in the first page, proceeds to pass on it his sentence of unqualified condemnation, what redress can the author have, if that redress lies not in his own arm? And if the circulation of the work in which he has been traduced be extensive in proportion to its general atrocity, how great is the injury which he has sustained? Whatever may be the situation in life of the scribblers of the Monthly Review, they display little sympathy with social relations. If they are hoary bachelors, "who youth ne'er lov'd, and beauty ne'er enjoy'd," and who are obliged to pay for their monthly garret with their monthly falsehoods, they may plead the devil's plea,—necessity. If, from the dizzy and amazing height of an Unitarian pulpit, they look down, with disgust and scorn, on the cobbler's stall, or tinker's bench of their fathers, the proverbial insolence of upstarts will account for theirs. Classical attain-

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\* Who can forbear to laugh when a fribble like this calls De Stael a "superficial writer?"

ments, one would think, ought to ameliorate the heart, however hard by nature; but when persons, with some pretension to learning, or who, at least, arrogantly pretend to it, sink beneath the lowest of the ignorant, they cast an imputation on learning itself. Happily for the Monthly Review, unhappily for its victims, it is invulnerable in dulness. The Quarterly Review has its Gifford, the Edinburgh its Jeffrey; but the stupidity of the Monthly Review is uniform and complete; no individual of talent rises out of and above its despicable level for satire to shoot at. This is the true reason why it has so long been suffered to insult common sense with impunity. The same reason will account for the comparatively extensive sale of a publication, the gossiping triteness of which flatters the imbecility of its readers; and, in spite of the enlarged intellect of the age, it will probably continue to be the favourite Review of children, clerical coxcombs, half-learned pedants, and old women of both sexes. It is, however, the opinion of persons who do not, perhaps, sufficiently appreciate the pertinacious zeal with which folly defends its heavy deities, that the Monthly Reviewers will inevitably write themselves down, and sink, by the weight of their native lead, the poor plank that supports them.



# THE EXILE.



## ADVERTISEMENT.

THE subject of this tale was suggested to me by a circumstance which occurred lately in North America. A ship arrived at Philadelphia, freighted with persons unable to pay their passage from Europe; and a gentleman, a native of Germany, whence he had emigrated about twenty years before, purchased two of those unhappy persons, who proved to be his own father and mother.

I am not prepared to say that white-slavery was ever authorized by the law of England; but the condition of a convict, sentenced to the plantations, differed, I believe, very little, if at all, from that of a negro slave. *See Holmes's American Annals.*

## INTRODUCTION.

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DESCEND from heav'n, proud prosperer ! and, oh,  
give,

With light to darkness, good to all that live !

Thou can'st not—for on earth is known to none

The smile that is not sister to a tear :

Man dreams of hope, but always wakes to fear.

World-lighting flambeau of that awful One

Whose greatness thought hath not conceived ! thou  
bright

And ruby-hair'd similitude of might

Omniscient, yet invisible and lone,

The stillness of All-Power upon his throne,

The life of life, whose fountain none can tell !  
Thou flar'st o'er ocean's nation girding streams  
Fearless of change, as though, indeed, thy beams  
Were of th' eternal, uncreated light.  
High, not secure ; bright, not unchangeable ;  
Oh, could thou boast immutability,  
Man's envious awe to worship thee would bow.  
Thou Eye of splendour ! say, what dost thou see,  
With that bright glance, above, around, below ?  
Unweeping pride, and pleasure only ? No !  
Vicissitude and ruin are to thee  
Too, too familiar ; and thou look'st on woe,  
And feel'st no pity. Thou thyself shalt fade,  
Extinguish'd, as a taper. He who made  
Can unmake all things. He, who reigns alone,  
The sole unrivall'd ! He, whose burning throne  
Is wheel'd on suns, shall quench thee with a frown,  
And cast thy dust beneath his axle down ;  
Crush'd, thou shalt roll no more. No wrinkle yet  
Of age insults thy beauty. Thou art bright  
As man's vain youth, with harlot joys beset,

Who says, while love, in ecstasy divine,  
Seals his warm cheek with lip that glows like thine,  
“ *My* fortune shall be splendid as thy light.”  
Thou laughing parent of the woeful years !  
Hence, with thy beams that mock the sorrowing  
    heart !  
In all thy pageantry of flame, depart !  
And let me commune with pale Night in tears.

## THE EXILE.

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“ And she was known to every star,  
And every blast that blows.”

WORDSWORTH.

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### I.

WITH many an isle-like cape that holy seems,  
The haunt of spirits, such as oft in dreams  
The dying patriot sees, and smiles to see,  
Then, waking, bids death strike, and set him free ;  
With many an isle-like cape, where fancy's child  
Might love to live, the hermit of the wild,  
Patowmac, thy romantic shore is speck'd,  
Proudly thy waters undulate in fire,  
Beneath hoar hills, with woods primeval deck'd ;  
And giant clouds, that o'er those hills aspire,

Curtain the setting sun, whose broad orb glows  
As if he wish'd, gazing in transport deep,  
To look sweet evening into blushing sleep,  
And, ere he slumber'd, kiss her in repose,  
Then sink to golden rest. Above thy tide,  
High on the rock that beetles at thy side,  
With fever'd soul, the exile, Alfred, stands ;  
And eastward looks, with straining eye, and deems  
He sees the ocean tremble, in the beams  
Of roseate Eve,—and thinks of distant lands ;  
Thinks of lov'd England, whence, by terror led,  
Escaped from Worcester's fatal fight, he fled,  
And sought in desert woods, o'er ocean cross'd,  
To cherish life, when all its joys were lost.  
Dear to the exile are fond memory's tales !  
They speak (how mournfully !) of Avon's vales,  
Sweet scenes, whose pleasures he no more may share,  
And her, his love, who mourns, deserted, there.

## II.

He saw eve's beamy purple fade away ;  
He watch'd the changeful clouds, till all was grey ;

He started. “ ’Twas the waving grass !” he said,  
“ I *am* not watch’d.”—Or, fluttering overhead,  
Did the owl start the oriole from rest ?—  
The humming bird reposes on the flower.  
Fragrance drinks freshness in her richest bower.  
High roosts the turkey. On Patowmac’s breast  
The mallard sleeps, and, here the rattlesnake  
Couch’d on his coils, the desert’s deadly pest.  
The bull-frog booms not yet ; but, accentless,  
The listening wave doth not a pebble shake ;  
Nor doth a sound disturb the loneliness  
Of nature in her slumbers ; nor a breeze  
Skim o’er the boundless forest, to awake  
The tempest-braving pine of centuries.  
And while the stars, that guard the tranquil skies,  
Look down in silence on the silent trees,  
High on the mountains azure crest the cloud  
Lies, like a giant in his snowy shroud,  
How silently ! Haply, at this sweet hour,  
In England, to the purple-blossom’d heath,  
The humming peat-man plods, while every bower

Weeps in the eye of morn; the drover wakes  
With dewy locks, and, while his plaid he shakes  
O'er crumpled grass, unbath'd by midnight shower,  
Calls his tried dog, that lurks the thorn beneath,  
Rous'd by whose voice, the bird that loves the sky  
Sheds bright pearls from his rich-wrought canopy,  
And, soaring, sings. And, o'er her fragrant pail,  
More sweetly sings the milkmaid in the vale.

And the mist lessens on the distant sea :  
And o'er the rooky grove the smoke curls slow :  
And fair the halcyon is, on withen tree,  
Whose giant arms stretch where the rock is riven ;  
But fairer far, on quivering waves below,  
Are rock, tree, halcyon, and serenest heaven.  
Oh, bless'd is he, who, arm'd with dusky gun,  
Sees, on Britannian wastes, the moorfowl run,  
Or flying, fall ! oh, bless'd, who hears the bells  
Sound o'er the dewy smile of Albion's dells,  
While age, and youth, and blissful love repair  
To Sabbath service, country wake, or fair !  
But is my injur'd Emma happy there?—

## III.

He spake, in tears of sweetly-mingled pain :  
What, though the heart that nurses woe is fain  
To build in darkness his unsocial seat ?  
What, though he loves the desert-spirit's sigh ?  
The tear that visits seldom his sad eye,  
Though life hath sweeter tears, may yet be sweet.  
Pensive and pale, return'd he to his farm,  
Where wealth was his, but not contentment's charm ;  
And as, with pausing footstep, he came near,  
Sad tones, that spake of wither'd joys once dear,  
Tones, which his heart acknowledg'd met his ear ;  
And retrospection drank of aconite.  
A moment, blank he stood, then onward flew ;  
But, as with lightning blasted, back he drew,  
And, trembling, gaz'd ! on what appalling sight ?  
No dusky daughter of the burning day  
Shrank from the slave-herd's whip, uplifted high ;  
On no dark maid of fervid Africa  
Gloated that scourger's Algirenian eye ;  
But, born where men are free, and maids are fair,

From happy Albion wafted o'er the wave,  
And late arriv'd, a convict, and a slave,  
Was she, for whose wild shriek he hunger'd there ;  
And on her cheek of woe the rose had been.  
To Alfred's tongue words came not ; but there came  
Strength to his arm, and to his spirit flame ;  
He rush'd the mourner and the pang between ;  
And, stunn'd beneath his blow, the slave-herd sank,  
And rose, and fell, and rose again, and drank,  
Not, with his eyes, his victim's startling blood,  
But, coughing, drank his own, and, ghastly, stood.  
Then faint, the Convict totter'd to her shed :  
Her sable sisters, weeping, stay'd her tread,  
And laid, on leaves of maize, her languid head,  
Where soon, by sad dreams visited, she slept,  
And, wildly, in her broken slumbers, wept.

## IV.

But Alfred slept not. On his spirit broke  
A troubled light ; and in his heart awoke  
The power that smiles to see the gloom increase,  
And, sleeping on the thunder, dreams of peace,

And holiest stillness ! the storm's angel, Hope.  
Oh, reft of her, could man, the insect, cope  
With darkness, dread, and danger ? He arose,  
Leaving the mattress of his pale unrest,  
And walk'd into the cool and midnight air,  
That whisper'd to the wildness of his breast,  
Like spirit from the islands of repose,  
And almost lull'd to sleep the demon, Care.

## V.

Darkness was spread o'er half the sky. The moon  
Slept on her sea of blue. The stars appear'd  
To dream around her, in night's awful noon !  
Wild lightnings, fluttering distant, fring'd with fire  
The growing darkness of the wrathful west ;  
And, on sublime Patowmac's troubled breast,  
Convolv'd in seeming agony and ire,  
The red reflection, like a dragon, burn'd.  
And, though the coming thunder was not heard,  
Yet, on the breezeless sky perturb'd, in dread,  
The silent bear his gleaming eyeball turn'd ;  
Hoarse croak'd the eagle on the mountain's head ;

The buffalo, in ominous horror, low'd ;  
The storm-fiend whisper'd from his desert cave ;  
The forest shudder'd, the tumultuous cloud  
Wander'd in Heav'n ; black rowl'd the moaning wave.

## VI.

Lone stood the cabin of the pallid slave ;  
And, through the door unclos'd, a pine-torch cast  
Its twinkling beam. With trembling knees, he pass'd  
Before the wan light thrice, then stood to gaze.  
She slumber'd still, and still she wept in sleep,  
While o'er her sad face gleam'd the feeble blaze.  
He enter'd ; and he could not chuse but weep ;  
For, as he bent above her faded frame,  
In murmuring accents faint, she sigh'd his name.  
“ Emma !” he said ; but falteringly he spoke—  
And kiss'd her brow ; again—and she awoke,  
And shriek'd, and rose half up, convuls'd with fear,  
Then, trembling, turn'd, and hid her face, in shame.  
But he, with soothing words, and many a tear,  
Spake to her woe, bidding her yet be glad,  
And question'd of her destiny severe,  
And how, and why, she met a doom so sad ?

She did not lift her eye—she fear'd to look  
On him who talk'd of comfort—but it came ;  
For, like a sweet remember'd vision, stole  
His tones of pity on her drooping soul ;  
Or, like the liquid music of the brook  
To thirst's charm'd ear, when th' unseen waters creep  
Beneath the blossoming umbrage of the vale,  
Among flowers dear to woe, that love to weep.  
And, thus, she told her melancholy tale,  
While, o'er the hut, loud moan'd th' increasing gale,  
And nearer thunder chas'd the lightning pale :

## VII.

“ Oh, thou art good !—I did not hope to hear  
The voice of kindness in this land of fear !—  
My love went to the war, and came not back :  
Prince Charles, they said, was worsted in the strife :  
Anxious, I watch'd, on expectation's rack ;  
But Alfred fled, beyond the sea, for life.  
Soon I became—a mother! not a wife.  
My wrathful parents spurn'd me from their door.  
Oh ! cherish'd, like the choicest garden flower,

And nurtured on the breast of tenderness,  
And all-unused to the evil hour,  
How should their silk-clad daughter face distress?  
Where should the outcast Emma lay her head?  
I sought, and found, a little, lowly shed,  
Where long we liv'd, resigned and calm, though  
poor :

My active needle earn'd our daily bread.  
But sickness, then, by famine follow'd, came :  
My hungry boy look'd up for food, and pin'd !  
My wearying task was profitless ; my frame,  
Enfeebled by disease, unnerv'd my mind.  
I would not beg the alms of charity,  
Nor ask the legal dole of paupery ;  
No, I did worse, far worse,—Heaven pardon me !  
Thou would'st not think that Emma once was fair ;  
Yet fair she was, or envy's self hath lied :  
And she had still some sweet and drooping charms ;  
But she had still some virtue, and some pride.  
I turn'd abhorrent from lust's venomous arms ;  
How *could* I clasp pollution to my heart ?  
I wept, and pray'd, but want would not depart ;

And my boy's asking look, so pale and sad,  
Drove me, in one unhappy moment, mad.  
No pitying daughter of the rich and free,  
With angel looks, and bounty, came to me.  
Oh, how I envied then the spotless maid  
Who pass'd me, blushing, and almost afraid!  
Spurn'd by the base, scarce pitied by the good,  
Affliction rush'd upon me, like a flood.  
No aid without, and want and woe within;  
Deserted—ah, no! left—by him I lov'd;  
My life's life was that boy, the child of sin!  
What mother's heart could see his tears, unmov'd?  
I pawn'd the stolen silk!—detected—tried,—  
In the throng'd court I stood, half-petrified,  
And there was doom'd beyond the billowy tide,  
On wild Columbia's shore of tears, to groan!

## VIII.

“ As on the strand I stood, and not alone,  
But, chain'd to others, like in crime and fate,  
And female, too, though lost to female fears,  
A man approach'd, more old in grief than years,  
And kiss'd the fetter'd hand he bathed with tears,

And, faltering, strove, but strove in vain, to speak  
Oh, he was chang'd ! but Emma knew him well ;  
And with him came forgiveness, though too late.  
But when he ask'd forgiveness of his child,  
His guilty child, I thought my heart would break !  
And when I bade him to my mother bear  
A lock of hapless Emma's golden hair,—  
A kiss from one so lost,—and pray'd him tell  
If she, too, had the sinful one forgiv'n,—  
Oh, God ! in more than agony, he *smil'd*,  
He rav'd, amid his tears, in laughter wild !  
“ Emma,” he said, “ thy mother is in Heaven,  
Brought to the grave with sorrow—not by thee,—  
It was God's will ! and none from sin are free.”  
Again he kiss'd me, and he turn'd to go ;  
But No,—poor Emma would not have it so ;  
He saw the boy on whom my sad eye fell,  
And kiss'd my little Alfred—then—farewell !  
I saw him not, but sobb'd, in sorrow blind,  
And heard his faint, “ God bless thee !” in the wind.

## IX.

“ Ah, surely, in that hour I should have died,  
But that my boy clung fondly to my side,  
And, not in vain, to soothe his mother tried !  
Then came a thought which nature could not bear :  
“ What ! take him from me ? ” shriek’d my heart’s  
despair.

But little Alfred left the land with me ;  
And, while the tall ship rush’d into the sea,  
He sate, and smil’d upon his mother’s knee,  
Pleas’d with the sails, the motion, and the deep.  
The billows seem’d to rock my cares to sleep.  
Oh, there was comfort in the dreadful thought  
That, far from happiest England, I should go,  
Where none who knew me could behold my woe,  
To taunt the burning shame that crime had brought ;  
And that the sad companions of my way  
Were wretches, too, but I less vile than they !  
I lov’d to sit upon the airy deck,  
While swell’d the moonlight heav’ns without a speck,  
O’er ocean without wrinkle ; and I lov’d,  
While star-light only glimmer’d through the clouds,

And, arrow-like, and billow-borne, we mov'd,  
To hear the fresh gale whistle in the shrouds,  
And see the maned waves each other chase,  
Like flaming coursers in the endless race.  
Then, with delighted terror from the prow,  
High on the mountain billow's summit curl'd,  
Down look'd I on the wat'ry vales below,  
That, like a tenantless and hopeless world,  
Barren and black, and deepening chilly, frown'd.  
And on that far land, whither I was bound,  
Enthusiast Hope beheld, nor whip, nor chains ;  
But hill and shadowy vale seem'd fairy-ground,  
And groves Elysian deck'd the teeming plains ;  
And airy fingers form'd, with many a flower  
Of dulcet breath, a visionary bower ;  
And there my fancy wander'd with my child,  
And saw him strive, with lifted hand, to reach  
The grape's dark luxury, or the glowing peach ;  
And peace walk'd with us through the balmy wild,  
Look'd on my tears, nor only look'd, but smil'd.

## X.

“ Oh, Heaven! thou should'st, according to the  
load,

Apportion strength to bear it on the road!  
My boy refus'd his food, forgot to play,  
And sicken'd on the waters, day by day.  
He smil'd more seldom on his mother's smile;  
He prattled less, in accents void of guile.  
Of that wild land, beyond the golden wave,  
Where I, not he, was doom'd to be a slave;  
Cold o'er his limbs, the listless languor grew;  
Paleness came o'er his eye of placid blue;  
Pale mourn'd the lily where the rose had died,  
And timid, trembling, clung he to my side.  
He was my all on earth. Oh! who can speak  
The anxious mother's too prophetic woe,  
Who sees death feeding on her dear child's cheek,  
And strives in vain to think it is not so?  
Ah! many a sad and sleepless night I pass'd,  
O'er his couch listening, in the pausing blast,  
While on his brow, more sad from hour to hour,  
Droop'd wan dejection, like a fading flower!

At length, my boy seem'd better, and I slept,—  
Oh, soundly ! but, methought, my mother wept  
O'er her poor Emma, and, in accents low,  
Said, ' Ah ! why do I weep ? and weep in vain  
For one so lov'd, so lost ? Emma, thy pain  
Draws to a close ! ev'n now is rent in twain  
The loveliest link that binds thy breast to woe.  
Soon, broken heart, we soon shall meet again !'  
Then o'er my face her freezing hand she cross'd,  
And, bending, kiss'd me with her lip of frost.  
I wak'd ; and, at my side,—Oh ! still and cold !—  
Oh ! what a tale that dreadful chillness told !  
Shrieking, I started up, in terror wild ;  
Alas ! and had I liv'd to dread my child ?  
Eager, I snatch'd him from his swinging bed ;  
His limbs were stiff—he mov'd not—he was dead !

## XI.

“ Oh ! let me weep !—what mother would not weep,  
To see her child committed to the deep ?—  
All lifeless, o'er his marble forehead roll'd,  
The third night saw his locks repose in gold.

Methinks 'twas moonlight, and a torch cast wide  
Its lanthorn'd radiance, o'er the amber'd tide,  
As wan on deck he lay, serenely fair,  
And, oh ! so like his sire ! that man of care,  
(From home and hope by ruthless fate impell'd,)  
Who *could* not come, my breaking heart to share,  
And ne'er his child, in life, or death, beheld !  
No mournful flowers, by weeping fondness laid,  
Nor pink, nor rose, droop'd, on his breast display'd,  
Nor half-blown daisy, in his little hand :  
Wide was the field around, but 'twas not land.  
Enamour'd death, with sweetly pensive grace,  
Was awful beauty on his silent face.  
No more his sad eye look'd me into tears !  
Clos'd was that eye beneath his pale cold brow ;  
And on his calm lips, which had lost their glow,  
But which, though pale, seem'd half unclos'd to  
    speak,  
Loiter'd a smile, like moonlight on the snow.  
I gaz'd upon him still—not wild with fears.—  
Gone were my fears, and present was despair !  
But, as I gaz'd, a little lock of hair,

Stirr'd by the breeze, play'd, trembling, on his  
cheek,—

Oh, God ! my heart !—I thought life still was there.  
But, to commit him to his wat'ry grave,  
O'er which the winds, unwearied mourners, rave,—  
One, who strove darkly sorrow's sob to sway,  
Uprais'd the body ; thrice I bade him stay ;  
For still my wordless woe had much to say,  
And still I bent, and gaz'd, and, gazing, wept.  
At last, my sisters, with humane constraint,  
Held me, and I was calm, as dying saint ;  
While that stern weeper lower'd into the sea  
My ill-starr'd boy ! deep—buried deep, he slept.  
And then I look'd to heaven in agony,  
And pray'd to end my pilgrimage of pain,  
That I might meet my beauteous boy again !  
Oh ! had he liv'd to reach this wretched land,  
And then expir'd ; I would have bless'd the strand.  
But, where my poor boy lies, I may not lie ;  
I cannot come, with broken heart, to sigh  
O'er his lov'd dust, and strew with flowers his turf :  
His pillow hath no cover, but the surf !

I may not pour the soul-drop from mine eye  
Near his cold bed : he slumbers in the wave !  
Oh ! I will *love* the sea, because it is his grave !”

## XII.

Weeping, she saw not him, whose swimming eye  
O'erflow'd with bitterness and agony :  
But when he smote his breast, with frenzied force,  
And, stamping, curs'd himself, in dread remorse :  
Then started she, as one who sleeps, with pain  
O'erwearied, starts awake, but sleeps again ;  
And soon, more calm, with alter'd voice, she said,  
“ Perhaps, my boy had liv'd, had Alfred stay'd !  
Ah ! wherefore fled he, hopeless and afraid ?  
And, ah ! why fled not Emma at his side ?  
I on the scaffold would, with him, have died.  
Without a look, a kiss, a tear, he went ;  
Unheard by Emma every pray'r he sent  
To heaven, (while grim mischance stood by, and  
smil'd,)  
To bless the mother of his unborn child !

Nor, after weeks, and months, and mournful years,  
Did his dear letter, sad, and stain'd with tears,  
Bring to her bosom, o'er the waters wide,  
Comfort and hope, which nought could bring beside!  
Alas! he fled not, but, at Worcester, died!"

## XIII.

" Oh, blame him not!" exclaim'd th' impassion'd  
youth,

" If he has err'd, forgive his fault, forgive!  
And canst thou doubt thy Alfred's love and truth?  
And deem him dead, who lives to bid thee live?  
We both live, Emma, happier days to see;  
Behold, 'tis Alfred's self, preserv'd for thee!  
Come to my heart! thou still art all to me."

## XIV.

Ah! clasp'd he death? or did she lifeless seem?  
Slackening his grasp, he stoop'd, but heard no sigh!  
Then paleness blush'd; and life's returning beam  
Relum'd the faded azure of her eye.

Faintly she strove to clasp him to her side :  
“ Was it, indeed, my angel’s voice ? ” she cried ;  
“ And wilt thou take the convict to thy breast ?  
And shall the vile, the outcast, the oppress’d,  
The poor and trodden worm, again be bless’d ?  
Ah ! no, no—heaven ordaineth otherwise !—  
My love !—we meet too late ! thy Emma dies.”

## XV.

Then, with clasp’d hands, and fervent hearts dismay’d,  
That she might live for him, both mutely pray’d.  
But o’er their silence burst the heavy blast ;  
And, on his pinions, the sky-torrent pass’d ;  
And down the giants of the forest dash’d ;  
And, pale as day, the night with lightning flash’d ;  
And, through aw’d heaven, a peal, that might have been  
The funeral dirge of suns and systems, crash’d :  
More dread, more near, the bright, blue blaze was  
seen,  
Peal following peal, with direr pause between.

On the wild light she turn'd her wilder eye,  
And grasp'd his hands, in dying agony,  
Fast, and still faster, as the flash rush'd by.  
“ Spare me !” she cried, “ Oh, thou destroying rod !  
Hark !—’tis the voice of unforgiving God !—  
A mother murder’d, and a sire in woe !  
Alfred, the deed was mine—for thee, for thee  
I broke her heart, and turn’d his locks to snow !  
Hark !—’tis the roaring of the stormy sea !  
Lo ! how the mountain billows fall and rise !  
And, while their rage, beneath the shrieking night,  
Lifts my boy’s tresses to the wild moon-light,  
Yet doth the wretch, th’ unwedded mother, live,  
Who for those poor, unvalued locks, would give  
All, save her hope to kiss them in the skies !  
But, see !—he rises from the ocean’s bed,  
And at his guilty mother shakes his head !  
There dost thou see him, blue and shiv’ring, stand,  
And, threat’ning, lift at thee his little hand.  
Oh, dreadful !—Hold me ! catch me ! die with me !  
Alas ! that must not, and it should not, be !

Pray, pray that both our sins may be forgiven ;  
Then come ! and heaven will—will, indeed, be heaven !”

## XVI.

He felt her slack'ning grasp his hand forego,  
And grasp'd more firmly her's, in speechless woe.  
Quiver'd her cheek, with death's convulsions streak'd:  
Still gaz'd he—all was fix'd ! he started up, and  
shriek'd.

## XVII.

No sound is heard, save of the brook increas'd ;  
The weary cloud is still. The blast hath ceas'd  
To rend the wildly-fluctuating sky,  
And tear the tall pine from his place on high.  
Meek quiet on the freshen'd verdure sleeps.  
Less frequent, from the beauteous cedar weeps  
The heavy rain-drop on the flower beneath ;  
And, fainter round the hills, the dying gale  
Murmurs the requiem of departed night ;  
While, like bless'd isles, the woods emerge in light,

In placid light, fair as the brow of death  
O'er which that mourner bends, so lost and pale.  
Emma, how sweet the calm that follows storms !  
How sweet to sleep in tears, and wake in heaven !  
Morn soon will smile on Nature's drooping charms,  
And smooth the tresses which the night hath riven ;  
But no sun shall arise that wretch to cheer ;  
Alas ! his grief despairs, and hath no tear !  
From heaven's deep blue the stars steal, one by one ;  
Pale, fades the moon—still paler—she is gone.  
As yet, no marshall'd clouds, in splendour roll'd,  
See, on Patowmac's breast, their mirror'd gold ;  
Yet, eastward, lo ! th' horizon, forest-fring'd,  
Blushes,—and dusky heights are ruby-ting'd !  
Lo !—like a warrior, in impatient ire,  
On mailed steed, fire-scarf'd, and helm'd with fire,  
Forth rides the sun, in burning beauty strong,  
Hurling his bright shafts, as he darts along !  
Oh ! not more splendidly emerg'd the morn,  
When light, and life, and blissful love were born,  
And day, and beauty, ere his woes began,  
Smil'd first Elysium on the soul of man,

And,—while no cloud in stillest heaven was seen,—  
O'er ocean's waveless magnitude serene,  
Rose, all on flame his vital race to run,  
In dreadless youth, how proudly, rose that sun !  
And see !—o'er Emma's still and snowy cheek  
There comes a glow, etherial, heavenly, meek,  
As if a lily blush'd to meet the light !  
But what, wan Exile, may be said to thee ?  
Look'st thou on death ? then death is fair to see.  
The sunbeams mingle with her lifeless hair ;  
From her clos'd eye a tear is stealing slow ;  
Life seems to linger on the silence there,  
Like fragrance in a gather'd rose of snow ;  
But, oh ! that kiss of ice !—despair ! despair !—  
Ah ! woods and waves, and heaven and earth, are  
    bright ;  
But, on the hopeless Exile's heart, 'tis night !



# MATRIMONIAL MAGIC.



## INTRODUCTION.

### I.

OH, Lady of the sable vest,  
Thy sad hands clasp'd upon thy breast !  
When heaven is hung with mourning, thou  
Turn'st from th' extinguish'd stars thy brow,  
To curse and interdict the light,  
And hallow darkness ! thou art Night.  
When shipwreck howls along the deep,  
Thou sittest on the wave-worn steep,  
To see destruction's giant hand  
With more than horror strew the strand !  
I call'd not *thee*, thou face of tears,  
All channell'd by the share of years !

Enough hath man of dread and sadness  
To turn his dream of hope to madness ;  
The throne of trouble is his heart.  
What need hath he of fear and thee ?  
Lady of Gloom ! depart, depart !

## II.

When she, the hope of nations, died,  
Whose story is a realm in woe,  
Was it not thou, whose wing supplied  
A fitting pall for such a bier ?  
Following the dead, with footstep slow,  
England beheld thy gloomy tear.  
While, from thy wan and trembling hand,  
Death's torch flash'd o'er a blasted land  
The mockery of the blessed day.  
Lady of Death ! away, away !  
Oh !—Lady of Despair !—away !

## III.

Hath Night no smiles ? or none for me ?  
I love not gloom, but jollity.

I may not paint the hell of guilt,  
The dreadful drop by murder spilt,  
The scowl of the renounc'd of heaven,  
The self-condemn'd, the unforgiven;  
That task be his, of soul severe,  
The poet of the burning tear,  
Who sung Medora, love, and woe;  
To gloomy spirit, darkness, go !  
Yet come, (but smiling,) Night, to me;  
Or, bring the urchin, Fun, with thee.

## MATRIMONIAL MAGIC.

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Oh, Tam, had'st thou but been sae wise  
As ta'en thy ain wife Kate's advice.

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BURNS.

'TWAS midnight wild ! and, heavy, pass'd  
O'er John White's cot the frequent blast.  
The clouds, beneath Night's awful noon,  
Pursued the oft-extinguish'd moon,  
Like troubled waves, that, maned with foam  
Bound o'er the sailor's wandering home.  
Long had John's window wanted mending ;  
And the blast blew his candle out,  
The sparks o'er bed and corn-bin sending.  
Cold by the fire, he wip'd his snout,

Or, shook the ashes from his short pipe ;  
And toothache gave him many a tort gripe ;  
While, like the very Hag of spite,  
Nell, his old wife, sat opposite ;  
And, o'er the sink, of nought afraid,  
Washing her smock, bent Moll, the maid ;  
And Tom, the plowman, on the floor  
Snor'd, though he was not heard to snore.  
Full thirty years had John taught Nelly ;  
Yet, still unlearn'd, though long at school,  
Brains had she never—in her belly ;  
What could he hope from such a fool ?  
They snagg'd, the learn'd aver, and truly,  
From August scorch'd, till blazing July ;  
For, while Nell bore not children any,  
Her husband father'd bastards many ;  
And said it was, by every liar,  
That oft the wife of Farmer Bacon  
Had Nell's Lord for her own mistaken,  
And that fat Giles, with face of fire,  
Had sons who might call John their Sire.

But Nelly was by nature evil ;  
And, were she riding to the devil,  
Yet would she, in her headlong course,  
Whip him who did not whip the horse.  
John ne'er was, by his neighbours, deem'd  
The best good-natured man on earth ;  
But sulkier now than ever seem'd  
The stern old sinner ! while to mirth  
And sudden fun inclin'd was Nell ;  
But why, old Johnny could not tell.  
No longer now the type express,  
And visible sign of loneliness,  
She laugh'd, talk'd, kick'd the kettle o'er,  
And laid John, sprawling, on the floor ;  
When had she such a fit before ?  
The ruddy embers, almost spent,  
Seem'd to partake her merriment,  
And wink o'erpower'd, then blaze amain.  
But all her pranks were play'd in vain ;  
For still more darkly frown'd old John.  
Vainly she laugh'd, like woman mad,  
And lifted up her dear old lad,

Then plac'd her palm his knee upon,  
And chuck'd his chin, and chuck'd again.  
Still sat he shy, with awful eye  
Like statue of austerity,  
Or banker's clerk behind his book,  
Or monthly critic in his nook,  
Hunting for flaws, but lacking game,  
And sick at thought of rising name.  
And cause, as after will be seen,  
There was, for both their moods, I ween.  
At last, incens'd, and weary, too,  
With wrinkled hand, of greyish blue,  
Into the fire her cap she threw ;  
And, from her crown, her tresses flew,  
And down her back, like pale snakes, hung,  
And o'er her breast, and o'er her beard ;  
While, grim as witch the fiends among,  
And, dancing like a squib, she sung,  
With more than melody, a song  
Which all true lovers should have heard.

## II.

“ How quiet, in the church-yard wide,  
Lie John and Nelly side by side !

    Their wedded war is o’er ;  
Silent the curtain lecture sweet,  
The Iliad in a nuptial sheet ;  
Hating, they died ; and hop’d to meet,  
    In heaven, or hell, no more.”

## III.

Moll laugh’d, almost until she split,  
And overthrew both suds and kit ;  
But still more grimly frown’d grey John :  
The old clock, which he gaz’d upon,  
Tick’d slower, some say, with affright ;  
A proof that spectres walk’d that night.  
He took his hat from where it hung ;  
But Nell more loud and wildly sung,  
    And seiz’d him, as in spite ;  
“ Stay thou with me, love, I pray thee,  
    For terrors haunt the night.”

And, rapid as the reinless wind,  
Around her love her arms she twin'd,  
And gave him such a potent kiss,  
As set the cottage-door ajar ;  
So loud it spake of wedded bliss.  
Moll stood astonish'd !—well she might,—  
Because it was a thing not common :  
“ Hem !” growl'd old John, “ Is't devil i' th' woman ?”  
And rais'd his hand, and push'd her far.  
Then—while the clock struck one, and shook,—  
Gruff, into th' night his way he took,  
And Nell bang'd after him the door ;  
And up rose Thomas from the floor,  
Staring, as if he fear'd the fall  
Of roof and rig-tree over all.

## IV.

By the wild moon's disastrous light,  
Whither, oh, Night, in such a night,  
Albeit unus'd to palpitations,  
Went the grey sire of generations ?  
He went (and haply for no good)  
Strait to the hut, beyond the wood,

Where dwelt, renown'd for cure of itch,  
Martha, the doctress, and the witch,  
Whose physic (there was magic in it)  
Could make folks sleep an hour a minute.  
Strange things, indeed, could Mat perform !  
'Tis certain she could lay a storm,  
And bottle th' lightning ; and—a wonder !—  
She kept in pots her pounded thunder ;  
And, when hot summers bak'd all dry,  
She pickled th' sunshine, to lay by  
For future use, in wintry day.  
But could poor Mat have witch'd away  
Those ills that caus'd her still to sigh,  
Disease, and age, and poverty ;  
Or, had she been young, fair, or rich,  
She would not have been deem'd a Witch.  
Her form, that once, perhaps, was strait,  
Was crooked now, as bend of skate,  
And, symptom sure of sorcery,  
She had a wart beneath her eye.  
Not of the Graces lov'd was she ;  
But Fun she lov'd, and her lov'd he,

Her best, almost her only friend.  
But she was wearing to her end ;  
And, though none better lov'd a joke,  
One secret woe, would oft provoke  
The deep, unbidden sigh, that spoke  
More than words could, but spoke in vain,  
And lighten'd not her load of pain.  
Her sons had left their house of birth,  
That house, no more the home of mirth ;  
All scatter'd were they over earth ;  
Well might she death to life prefer !  
Alas, they fail'd to visit her !  
Years pass'd, and still they came not near ;  
This cost her many a bitter tear.  
The four green acres, low and warm,  
(Now join'd to fat Giles Bacon's farm,)—  
That fed their cow, ere William died,—  
She wish'd to keep them ! 'twas denied ;  
And the dark workhouse, frowning nigh,  
Was her sole earthly treasury.  
Oh ! to desertion, want, and age,  
What ill could fate add, in his rage ?

What bore she in her aged breast ?  
Not the dread fire of soul unblest'd ;  
But in that bosom, torture-sore,  
A cancer, cureless ill, she bore !  
Death star'd her ever in the face,  
And woe watch'd in her dwelling place ;  
Yet was she cheerful, though in pain ;  
For in the cup which she must drain,  
A gem of heavenly lustre shone.  
And, frequent, on her pillow lone,  
She shed the tear of memory,—  
No curse to her ! with streaming eye,  
Then thought she of her husband's grave,  
Crown'd with the turf of twenty years,  
Where latest verdure still shall wave,  
And spring the earliest daisy rears.  
The dead, whom vainly we deplore,  
Not lost, she deem'd, but gone before ;  
And her tried soul, its haven nigh,  
Was anchor'd on eternity.  
Heaven, pitying, stoop'd, to make her sorrows less,  
Man scowl'd to see her burdensome distress,  
And the dogs knew her by her wretchedness.

## V.

Night's angels (who, perchance, know well  
More queer things than they choose to tell)  
Have not inform'd us what befell  
John, on the road from home and hell,  
To meet the wrinkled sorceress ;  
Whether the air-borne coffin met  
The hoary sinner on his way ;  
Whether the whisper accentless  
Of wretch self slain, his path beset,  
While dumb hand beckon'd him to stay ;  
Whether he stood aghast to see,  
Beneath the yew's eternal gloom,  
Gleaming in rawness horribly,  
The flay'd horse, rampant on a tomb ;  
Or whether, where the four roads meet,  
And the three oaks their moss'd boughs stretch,  
He heard the sound of lifeless feet,  
Or sigh of ne'er-seen gabelwretch.  
But 'tis most certain, that the spark  
Which redly rose, and rose to die,  
From Martha's chimney in the dark,

Woke not in Johnny's breast a sigh,  
Or thought of his mortality.  
No!—Queerer thoughts on John, instead,  
Grinn'd, like an old wife's maidenhead,  
And, laughing through his frost, were seen  
The wrinkles of a leaf of green.

## VI.

He reach'd the hut, and knock'd with strength;  
Long knock'd he vainly! but, at length,  
The door was open'd, and he enter'd,  
Wondering no little how he ventur'd.  
Yet scarce within the open door,  
He stood, the viewless witch before;  
For darkness darken'd, in the light  
That glimmer'd from the eyes of sprite  
Who with her dwelt, in shape a cat;  
And Johnny quak'd with dread thereat!  
But when he heard the demon pur,—  
His very guts began to stir!  
And that sound only could he hear,  
Save creaking fire, all rayless, near.

His slow foot, lifted from the ground,  
Struck something that return'd no sound ;  
Dead to the touch, and black it lay.  
Yet, causeless, learn'd historians say,  
At that dire moment, were his fears,  
And that 'twas but a bag of soot  
'Gainst which so dreadly struck his foot.  
Her son, the sweep, to do her honour,  
Had call'd that afternoon upon her,  
For the first time in ten long years :  
He spake not,—though he saw her tears,—  
But left his bag, and went away,  
Because he did not come to stay.  
And yet, oh ! widow, yet to thee,  
That visit stern was ecstasy !  
The mother, bow'd with time and pain,  
Hath seen her child, her child, again !  
Oh ! sweetest in thy bitter cup,  
That sweet drop, mother, drink it up !  
Sweet, and the last that thou shalt have,  
Perchance, on this side of the grave !—

Oh ! even in woe's petrific shade,  
Where age and want the wretch invade,  
Nature, thy bless'd affections burn !  
Bless'd, she awaited his return :  
“ He'll come back for his bag !” she said ;  
Nor could the wealth of worlds have bought  
Th' Elysium of that simple thought ;  
But so deep in the reverie  
Of its enjoyment lapp'd was she,  
That John, unheard, and bent on sin,  
Knock'd long, before she let him in.

## VII.

“ Mat !” said grey John, and listen'd, “ Mat !  
Well know you what I would be at :  
True to appointment, here stand I.  
May the lie choak me, if I lie !  
But Nell, as bottled beer, is mad.  
Curs'd with a shrew, a woful man,  
Now rid me, as you say you can,  
Of her, and married misery ;

Or I shall be than she is madder.  
If she were dead, I should be glad ;  
And would I in her coffin had her !  
Not that I love my servant Molly,  
As bawls Giles Bacon, in his folly ;  
For that would be both sin and shame,  
In one so old as I am, dame.  
Beside, I fear she likes my man,  
Who ne'er gets drunk, but when he can :  
Sot ! he should th' whipping post be tied to,  
If all lov'd whoremasters as I do !"

## VIII.

Mute, sigh'd the witch : he heard the sigh,  
But did not heed it ! nor could he  
Discern the pity, mix'd with scorn,  
That glimmer'd in her faded eye,  
Behind her locks so white and worn.  
Even in resentment, kind was she :  
Unlike some saints of this sad world  
Whose life of serpents, envy curl'd,

Would venom, while it kiss'd a brother ;  
Saints than whom nought in hell can be  
Less like the angels of the other !  
Honey with gall she lov'd to deal,  
And never wounded, but to heal.

## IX.

“ It will be all the same to me,  
Whether my wife,” continued he,  
“ Be carried, living, into hell,  
Or, by enchantment, die in bed.”

## X.

Still was the sorceress silent. “ Nell  
Must, when her time comes, die,” he said,  
“ Nor care I, if she die before,—  
Provided we from guilt be free,  
That is, provided none blame me.  
Aye, let the blame at Satan's door,  
Or any door, but mine, be laid,  
And even do with her what thou wilt ;  
For then we *shall* be free from guilt.”

## XI.

“ Certainly,” said the witch, at last,  
“ The blame will, as we wish, be cast  
Ev’n on themselves, the evil powers,  
’Twill *seem* the Devil’s deed, and not our’s.  
But that contrive we can to steer  
Guiltless, as blameless, is not clear.”

## XII.

“ For guilt no matter !” answer’d he,  
“ Provided slander silent be,  
Conscience shall sit as still as she.”

## XIII.

“ Yet pause,” said Mat, “ or ere thou do  
This thing of fear. Canst thou go through  
The dreadful business, without shrinking?  
Think.”—“ Phoo !” cried he, “ what matters think-  
ing ?

I *will* go through it, come what may ;—  
Not that I love my servant Molly,  
As guts, lies, horns, and melancholy

May (having often said it) say ;  
For Giles, whom no ties satisfy,  
Is not content, we all know well,  
To talk of sweet sounds as they fly,  
But hoards, for after claps, the smell ;  
A huge paunch, set on props a-straddle,  
That, ever cramming, never glutted,  
Hath fed (all swear't who see his waddle)  
On roast ducks till he's grown web-footed !"

## XIV.

" Lo !" mutter'd she, " I write thy name  
In Satan's blood !" Then, still more low,  
In accents half suppress'd, and slow,  
She spake the curse : " May fiends of flame  
Pursue, and scourge thee to the tomb,  
A hope-left, God-abandon'd man !  
And may the hell-rung frying-pan  
Jar in thine ears till th' crack of doom !  
If thou perform not what I bid,  
When fate hath clos'd this volume's lid !

And woe ! if thou have aught conceal'd,  
And not thine inmost soul reveal'd."

## XV.

Then, with the magic grasp of hands,  
The witch impos'd her dread commands,  
In whispers, such as sinners needed,  
And us'd with caution, in th' beginning,  
Ere prayers and cant had superseded  
The use of clumsier tools in sinning ;  
And, passion-rul'd, and evil-sent,  
And hag-instructed, forth he went.  
Whither ? To Bacon's barn, that stood  
Where roars the river through the wood,  
Then battling with the blast on high,  
And o'er rocks waving gloomily,  
What time, in dreams of dying men,  
The winged dragon, from his den,  
Was seen, o'er Huthwaite's firs reclin'd,  
To lash, with tail of woe, the wind.  
He, entering, trode the spacious floor,  
But did not dare to shut the door ;

And, while the moon's inconstant light,  
Illum'd, by fits, his locks of white,  
Thus he address'd, on bended knee,  
The powers that are, and still will be,  
Till man shall triumph o'er the grave,  
And fate no more be passion's slave.

## XVI.

“ Ye, who prescribe the doom of man !  
Ye, to whom life is dancing dust !  
Ye, who must aid me, if you can !  
(Dread slaves !) ye shall ! because ye must.—  
Let my wife die ! no matter how ;  
But be it soon ! and why not now ?  
And, if to wed again I choose,  
Let not the baggage, Moll, refuse !  
For well ye know,—or I'd not tell ye,—  
I love her, as I ne'er lov'd Nelly,  
And Giles says, all my actions show it :  
I tell ye th' truth, because ye know it.  
Now—by her chaste lip's rosy red !  
And by her stainless maidenhead !

And by her garters, strip'd with black !  
And by the gown upon her back,  
Made of six yards of tawny cotton,  
Which I bought cheap, because 'twas rotten,  
And to her gave, (all good betide her !)  
Unknown to Nell, who can't abide her !  
By these, and by her soul and liver,  
Let her, I charge ye, love the giver  
Of gown and garters, and forever  
John White to all the world prefer,  
With passion hot, as his for her !  
Last—make me, spite of time and pain,  
(If ye *can* do it,) young again !”

## XVII.

Lo ! as if dead in heaven, the moon  
Vanish'd from night's portentous noon !  
And two fleet forms, perchance, of air,  
(John saw not whether foul or fair,)  
Enter'd the barn inaudibly ;  
And, quick, as glance of trout in stream,  
Sudden, as comes, uncall'd, a dream,

Clos'd the huge door. All-shuddering, he  
Might soothly swear, but might not see,  
That things of earth they could not be.  
And now, immers'd in utter darkness,  
Even his inward light was sparkless ;  
For, as he felt, or smelt, or heard  
Their passing tread, his ancient beard  
Cring'd, and his hair threw off his hat ;  
And, as in river plunges rat,  
Down, heavy, dropp'd the hat to th' ground,  
Which inly groan'd, a deathly sound,  
Like fall of clay on coffin lid.  
Johnny, 'tis written, never did,  
When of that twain he chose to tell,  
Say what the craft they made a trade of,  
Nor what the stuff he thought them made of,—  
Whether o' th' dunnest smoke of hell,  
Or moonshine, when invisible,  
Or sound, or fragrance : who shall tell ?  
But, howsoe'er it came to pass,  
An odour certainly there was,

Though some aver who would not lie,  
It savour'd of mortality.  
But Johnny neither would nor could,  
Suppose they might be flesh and blood ;  
And, if omniscient, too, they were,  
They must have known that *he* was there !  
Yet learn'd historians have averr'd,  
And bards have sung, and I have heard,  
Whate'er might then their business be,  
They did not wish for company.  
Bodiless did the phantoms glide ?  
And yet an elbow struck his side !  
But hoary John was too polite  
To ask, at such a time of night,  
How elbow of unreal sprite  
Did e'er, or could, since time began,  
Give pain to rib of living man ;  
But, listening, as was wise and meet,  
He heard what seem'd the tread of feet,  
Like distant step on midnight street ;  
And something heavy seem'd to fall,  
If not on th' floor, against the wall.

Then, while his heart throbb'd loud and fast,  
Ceas'd the old walls to reel and shake ?  
The rafters, overhead, to quake ?  
The earth to shudder ? Did the blast  
Pause, and at once, on clouds above ?  
And slept the aspin in the grove ?  
Did he—a power, but not a form,—  
Who more than whirlwind's strength can bind ;  
Did he, the Genius of the storm,  
Stoop, listening, as he rein'd the wind ?  
Did midnight, did the stars, the skies,  
With damned witchcraft sympathise ?

## XVIII.

Poor human nature ! could'st thou see,  
In their own forms, distinct and bare,  
Stripped of their *fancied* foul and fair,  
The things that bless, or bother, thee ;  
Then—Earth, indeed, would desert be !

## XIX.

The tyrant is sometimes a slave ;  
So brave men are not always brave :

Truth treads o' th' tale of serpent error ;  
So courage may succeed to terror.  
Vanish'd, at length, poor Johnny's fears,  
And he began to prick his ears.  
'Twas silence all ! save, soft and low,  
A sound, as of the melting snow ;  
Or, distant music's faintest flow ;  
Or, sigh of sorrow in repose ;  
Or, dewdrop, sliding from the rose,  
When, sweet, the breath of midnight blows ;  
Or, murmur of the moonlight grass,  
When fairies o'er the daisy pass ;  
Or, tremble of the conscious grove  
That hides the stolen kiss of love  
Even from the prying stars above,  
When passion pants on beauty's cheek,  
And blushes what it cannot speak.  
John wish'd for light, to use his eyes !  
What was that voice of whisper'd bliss ?  
Was't the old compound, lovers' sighs,  
Mix'd with the oft-imprinted kiss ;

A compound, ere love learn'd to grieve,  
Invented by our mother Eve,  
Who granted—so 'tis said of Madam—  
A patent for't to the devil, and Adam?  
Lo! light burst, sudden, from on high!  
John ask'd no questions, how, or why,  
But all was light, as brightest day!  
And, plain, before him, on the hay,  
The two mysterious phantoms lay,  
Less like two spectres, side by side,  
Than bridegroom and enamour'd bride.  
Male seem'd the one; John could have ta'en him  
For his own plowman, Tommy Blainim,  
So like he seem'd in form and size:  
But t'other caus'd him most surprise!  
Female it seem'd, with bosom bare;  
And, o'er the heaven of whiteness there,  
Seem'd wandering locks of Night's dark hair!  
But may he call his eyes his own?  
Or, *did* he buy that tawny gown?  
And does he see, or seem to see,  
Bound on that loveliest spectre-knee,

A garter, strip'd with black and white?  
He star'd with eyes mile-wide, or more:  
Darkness and devils, what a sight!  
And soon his grunt became a roar!  
“ Forgery! Tipstaves! Help! Thou boar!  
“ Oh, Lord, ha' mercy! Moll, Tom! Whore!”

## XX.

Shrieking, up sprang that seeming female;  
Laughing, with her upstarted *the* male;  
A laugh it was, uncouth and dread,  
That shook the stumps in Johnny's head.  
Still, as he laugh'd, the spectre rais'd  
His eye accurs'd, and upward gaz'd.  
And upward, too, look'd haggard John:—  
Oh, Night! what horror stares he on?  
What vision binds him, or what charm?  
And something trickles, wet and warm,  
As tear of brine from mourner's eyes,  
Down both his lean and wither'd thighs,  
Which when that laughing devil sees  
Hot-issuing at the breeches knees,

And dripping, bright, as rose distill'd,  
Until the wooden shoes are fill'd,  
He claps his hellish hands for gladness,  
And howls, like folly drunk, or madness.

## XXI.

As lady fine, rais'd from her grave  
By some abhorr'd enchanter-knave,  
(And still, as erst, precise and proud,)  
Shudders, and, from her faded shroud,  
The wriggling worms, so foul to sense,  
Shakes,—wondering at their impudence;  
So wonder'd Johnny!—well he might,—  
To see the sibyl of affright  
Who, seated on the highest beam,  
Cast from her eyes a sulphur-gleam,  
Which he beholding, lowly cring'd,  
For't seem'd a blaze that might have sing'd  
His very soul, if he had had one,  
So grimly glar'd that very bad one.  
Her awful right hand grasp'd a candle;  
And in the other, like pump handle,

Wav'd, what hath made the bravest falter,  
The twisted cord of fate, a halter;  
While, streaming from her capless scull,  
Her gorgon tresses, white as wool,  
Veil'd features that might startle hell.  
John thought he saw his old wife Nell!  
And, diuretic as he trembled,  
Muttering what could not be dissembled,  
(Like night-mare in a widow's bed,  
Who sees, return'd, her husband, dead,)  
"Take any shape but that!" he said;  
While to the balk, with hideous leer,  
The hag bound fast her cord of fear,  
Which done, these accents met his ear:  
"Did'st thou not come to get unmarried?  
Then, John, thy plot hath not miscarried.  
Place in this noose thy neck abhorr'd;  
And, if I stir, to cut the cord,  
Still shall Old Nick thy true friend be,  
And hang grey Nell, instead of thee."

## XXII.

Alas ! what horrors face must he  
Who deals with damned sorcery !  
The door, at that dread instant, flew  
Wide open, and rush'd in a crew  
Of demons dire, that well could ape  
The human voice, the human shape,  
'Mid whom, on stang high mounted, sate  
Martha, the grisly hag of fate.  
What torches of Plutonian tar  
Cast red their radiance near and far !  
In hands of seeming boy and man  
Was many a seeming frying-pan ;  
And female voices rang in air,  
And many a seeming cap was there,  
And many a bosom laughter heav'd ;  
And hundreds grinn'd, while one was griev'd.  
John thought his neighbours, for their evils,  
Fed all on brimstone, and were devils !

## XXIII.

“ Come down, in all thy charms, come down !  
John shall not die ! ” yell'd Mat the brown ;

“ But though thou may'st not him there hang,  
Thou shalt, with halter, soundly bang  
His back and sides, and ancient breech,  
Until his distant home he reach.”

Thereat, what seem'd her sooty son  
Began John's torments new, for fun :  
Sly, he approach'd, in raven guise,  
And, into John's despairing eyes,  
A handful threw of dusky grain !  
Then black tears flow'd, like sable rain ;  
And Johnny fled, but slowly flew,  
Him hemm'd so close the goblin crew.  
Still, as he strove his flight to urge,  
That wife-like spectre plied the scourge,  
And chang'd, with halter's sounding thwack,  
From white to black and blue, his back ;  
While laughter, and demoniac noises  
Made such pother in the night,  
That certain asses, wak'd in fright,  
Half-envious, wish'd to change their voices.  
Small leisure then had John to wonder  
At what seem'd Farmer Bacon's thunder ;

A voice it was that struck him dumb,—  
To any witch, worth any sum,  
To raise the devil with, in a storm.  
But lowly bow'd his bleeding form ;  
Fainting, he stoop'd, amid the throng,  
Yet 'scap'd not so the cruel thong.  
At length, from scalp to buttock sore,  
Eager, he reach'd his cottage door,  
Where entering, pale,—how stunn'd was he,  
Asleep by th' fire, old Nell to see !  
Up she arose, and sad was she,

And cause she had to grieve !  
He scratch'd his head, he touch'd his belly,  
Nor could, nor would believe,  
*If* he was John, that she was Nelly !  
Until, at last, his pains to ease,  
She stripp'd him bare from head to knee,  
And rubb'd his back with candle-grease,  
And fondly pass'd her faithful thumb  
From scragg of neck to ridge of bum.

## BOTHWELL.

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### ADVERTISEMENT.

AFTER the conspirators against David Rizio had seized the person of Mary Queen of Scots, James Hepburn, Earl of Bothwell, became very instrumental in the recovery of her liberty. Her gratitude was soon converted into love. She held at Jedburgh a court of justice, during the sitting of which Bothwell was wounded in a skirmish, and carried to Hermitage Castle. Mary flew thither with suspicious impatience; and, on her return to Jedburgh, fatigue, and the anguish of her mind, threw her into a fever. During her illness, her husband, Darnley, never made his appearance at Jedburgh. When she baptized her son at Stirling, he also repaired thither, but only to remain sullenly in

his apartment. The Queen felt this insult deeply, and often wept. Immediately after the departure of the King from Stirling, and before his arrival at Glasgow, he was seized with a distemper, which was supposed to be the effect of poison. Mary jaunted all over the kingdom, and suffered a month to elapse before she visited him. He had then nearly recovered, and she became apparently reconciled to him; but in two of her letters, written at the time to Bothwell, she expresses a boundless passion for the Earl, and equal contempt of the King. Darnley suffered himself to be persuaded to remove with her to a house near Edinburgh, called Kirk of Field, on the pretence that he would there be nearer the advice of physicians. Mary was seldom absent from him during the day, and slept several nights in a chamber under him. But on Sunday, February 9, 1567, about eleven at night, she left him, to be present at a mask in the palace. About two in the morning, the house in which the King slept was blown up with gunpowder. The shock alarmed the whole city. The dead body of the King was found in a garden near the house, untouched by fire, and without any mark of violence upon it. Bothwell and the Queen were universally suspected. Voices were heard at midnight, charging him with the mur-

der. But he fearlessly invited the nobles to an entertainment, when, having surrounded the house with armed men, he informed them that he had obtained the consent of the Queen to his marriage with her, and demanded not their advice, but their approbation. Seaton warmly seconded him; and, by promises, flattery, terror, and force, he prevailed upon all present to subscribe an infamous paper. Mary, on pretence of visiting her son, went from Edinburgh to Stirling, when Bothwell, meeting her on her return near Linlithgow, dispersed her slender train, and carried her a prisoner to his castle of Dunbar. And thus, if we may believe the letters ascribed to her, she became his willing and intentional captive. Bothwell then procured a divorce from his wife, the Lady Jane Gordon, sister to the Earl of Huntly, and married the Queen. Craig the minister, who was commanded to publish the banns, loudly expressed his disapprobation. The people maintained a sullen silence. Bothwell attempted to get the Prince out of the hands of the Earl of Mar, but unsuccessfully. The nobles flew to arms. He advanced to meet his advancing foes. They found him with the Queen, on the same ground which the English occupied before the battle of Pinkie. Du Croc, the French ambassador,

attempted to negotiate ; but Morton and Glencairn sternly answered, that, not being in arms against the Queen, they came not to ask pardon, but to punish the King's murderer. By this time, the Queen's army, although it was posted advantageously, and more numerous than the other, began to steal out of the field. Mary endeavoured to animate her troops ; she wept, threatened, and reproached them with cowardice, but in vain. Bothwell then offered to decide the battle by single combat. Kirkaldy of Grange, Murray of Tullibardin, and Lord Lindsay, contended for the honour of fighting with him. But either the consciousness of guilt deprived Bothwell of his wonted courage, or the Queen forbade the combat. He took his last farewell of her, and rode off, with a few followers, one month after his marriage. The Queen was conducted to Edinburgh in triumph, the victors bearing a flag before her, on which were painted the dead body of Darnley, with the Prince kneeling beside it, and the words, " Judge, and revenge my cause, O God !" Bothwell fitted out a few small ships, and became a pirate. But Murray and the brave Kirkaldy defeated his fleet, and compelled him to fly towards the coast of Norway, with a single ship. On that coast, he fell in with a vessel richly laden, which he attack-

ed ; but boats from the shore assisting the Norwegian ship, his own, after a desperate fight, was captured. All his followers were executed ; but he himself was thrown into prison, where he became insane, and died, after a captivity of ten years.

The action of this poem commences a few hours before the death of Bothwell, which I suppose to be preceded by an awful, though imperfect, return of reason and memory, during which, with fervid and half-frantic irregularity, he relates his history to his fellow prisoner, with whom he had been confined ten years, without knowing him, and without being even conscious of his presence.

## INTRODUCTION.



### I.

SPLENDOUR in heaven, and horror on the main!  
Sunshine and storm at once, a troubled day.  
Clouds roll in brightness, and descend in rain.  
How the waves rush into the rocky bay,  
Shaking th' eternal barriers of the land!  
And ocean's face is like a battle-plain,  
Where giant demons combat, hand to hand,  
While—as their voices sink, and swell again,—  
Peace, on the beauteous bow, sits listening, but in  
pain.

### II.

Mighty to calcine on woe's cheek the tears,  
Or, lest he perish, bid the current flow,

Where is the voice, whose stillness man's heart hears,  
Like dream'd-of music, wordless, soft, and low ?  
That voice the whirlwind in his rage reveres ;  
It bids the blast a tranquil Sabbath keep ;  
Lonely as death, harmonious as the spheres,  
It whispers to the wildness of the deep ;  
And, calm as cradled babe, th' obedient billows sleep.

## III.

Oh, careless of the tempest in his ire,  
Blush, ruby glow of western heaven ! oh, cast  
The hue of roses, steep'd in liquid fire,  
O'er ocean in his conflict with the blast,  
And quiver into darkness, and retire,  
And let wild day to calmest night subside ;  
Let the tir'd sailor from his dread respire,  
The drench'd flag hang, unmoving, o'er the tide,  
And, pillow'd on still clouds, the weary whirlwind  
ride.

## IV.

Then, Queen of silence, robe thee, and arise,  
And, through the barr'd loop of that dungeon old,

Visit once more its inmates blasted eyes,  
Which shall again, though late, thy light behold.  
Soulless, not sightless, have his eye-balls roll'd  
Alike, in light and darkness desolate :  
The storm beat on his heart—he felt no cold ;  
Summer look'd on him, from heaven's fiery gate—  
He scowl'd, but felt no heat, and knew not that he  
scowl'd.

## V.

Unweeping, yet perturb'd ; his bed a stone ;  
Bonds on his body ; on his mind a spell ;  
Ten years in solitude, (yet not alone,)  
And conscious only to the inward hell,  
There hath it been his hideous lot to dwell.  
But pitying Night shall bid a dream depart,  
To chase from his dark soul the demon fell,  
And, whispering, find a listener in his heart ;  
And he shall weep again ! then, tearless, dreamless,  
dwell,  
Dark tenant, in the dust, unrung by passing-bell.

## BOTHWELL.

---

Mark, how that lone and blighted bosom sears  
The scathing thought of execrated years !

LORD BYRON.

---

### I.

Is it repose, or death? The drowsy trees  
Scarce stir a leaflet; and, on ocean's breast,  
How softly, yet how solemnly, the breeze,  
With unperceived gradation, sinks to rest !  
No voice, no sound is on the ear impress'd ;  
Twilight is weeping o'er the pensive rose ;  
The stoat slumbers coiled up in his nest ;  
The grossbeak on the owl's perch seeks repose ;  
And slowly o'er the heights the pale light grows.

Waked by the bat, upsprings the startled snake.  
The cloud's edge brightens,—lo, the moon! and  
grove,  
And tree, and shrub, bath'd in her beams, awake,  
With tresses cluster'd like the locks of love.  
Behold!—the ocean's tremor!—slowly move  
The cloud-like sails; and, as their way they urge,  
Fancy might almost deem she saw above,  
The streamers' chasten'd hues: bright sleeps the  
surge,  
And dark the fort, on ocean's glittering verge.  
Now lovers meet, and labour's task is done.  
Now stillness hears the breathing heifer. Now  
Heaven's azure deepens; and, where rock rills run,  
Rest on the shadowy mountain's airy brow  
Clouds that have ta'en their farewell of the sun;  
While calmness, reigning o'er that wint'ry clime,  
Pauses and listens;—hark!—the evening gun!  
Oh, hark!—the sound expires! and silence is sublime.

## II.

Moonlight o'er ocean's stillness! on the crest  
Of the poor maniac, moonlight! he is calm;

Calmer he soon will be in endless rest.  
Oh, be thy coolness to his brow as balm,  
And breathe, thou fresh breeze, on his burning  
breast !

For memory is returning to his brain ;  
The dreadful past, with worse than woe impress'd ;  
And torturing time's eternity of pain ;  
The curse of mind returns! oh, take it back again !

## III.

RHINVALT.

“ Alas, how flutteringly he draws his breath !”

BOTHWELL.

“ My blessed Mary !”

RHINVALT.

“ Calmer he appears ;  
Sad, fatal symptom ! swift approaches death.”

BOTHWELL.

“ Mary ! a hand of fire my bosom sears.—  
Oh, do not leave me !—Heavenly Mary !—years,

Ages of torture pass'd—and thou cam'st not ;  
I waited still, and watch'd, but not in tears ;  
I could not weep ; mine eyes are dry and hot,  
And long, long since, to shed a tear forgot.—  
A word ! tho' it condemn me !—stay !—she's gone !  
Gone ! and to come no more !”

## RHINVALT.

“ Ah ! is it so ?

His pilgrimage is o'er, his task is done.  
How grimly still he lies ! Yet his eyes glow,  
As with strange meaning.—Troubled spirit, go !—  
How threat'ningly his teeth are clench'd ! how fast  
He clutches his grasp'd hair !—hush !—breathless ?  
No.

Life still is here, though withering hope be pass'd :  
Come, bridegroom of despair ! and be this sigh his  
last !”

## IV.

## BOTHWELL.

“ Where am I ? What art thou ?”

RHINVALT.

“ Call me a friend,

And this a prison.”

BOTHWELL.

“ Voice of torture, cease!—

Oh, it returns!—terrific vision, end!—

When was it? Yesterday?—no matter,—peace!

I do remember, and too well, too well.”

RHINVALT.

“ How is it with thee?”

BOTHWELL.

“ Why wilt thou offend?—

Ha! all ye fiends of earth, and ye of hell,

I surely *am* awake! Thine angel send,Thou, King of Terrors call'd, and break this hideous  
spell!”

V.

RHINVALT.

“ A tear? and shed by thee?”

## BOTHWELL.

“ I breath’d in flame ;  
The sleepless worm of wrath was busy here ;  
When—ah, it was a dream ! my lady came,  
Lovely and wan in woe, with the big tear  
To cool my fever’d soul. In love and fear,  
O’er me she bent, as at the Hermitage,  
When (maim’d in conflict with mountaineer)  
She kiss’d my wounds, while Darnley swell’d with  
rage ;  
Tears only ! not a word ! she fled—and I am here.  
She fled ; and then, within a sable room,  
Methought, I saw the headsman and the axe ;  
And men stood round the block, with brows of  
gloom,  
Gazing, yet mute, as images of wax ;  
And, while the victim mov’d to meet her doom,  
All wept for Mary Stuart. Pale, she bent,  
As when we parted last ; yet towards the tomb  
Calmly she look’d, and smiling prayers up sent  
To pitying heaven. A deep and fearful boom

Of mutter'd accents rose, when to the ground  
The sever'd head fell, bleeding ! and, aghast,  
Horror on horror star'd. And then a sound  
Swell'd, hoarsely yelling, on the sudden blast,  
As of a female voice that mimick'd woe ; (1)  
But, as above that hall of death it pass'd,  
'Twas changed into a laugh, wild, sullen, low,  
Like growl of fiends, who, from heaven's splendour  
cast,  
Quaff fire and wrath, where pain's red embers glow.—  
Do I not know thee ! I'm forgetful grown :  
Where did I see thee first ?"—

## RHINVALT.

“ Here, even here ;  
Thy ten years' comrade, still to thee unknown.  
In all that time thou did'st not shed a tear,  
Until this hour. Raving, with groan on groan,  
Thou speak'st of more than horror ! and thy moan  
Was torture's music. O'er thy forehead hot  
Thine hands were clasp'd ; and still wast thou alone,

Brooding o'er things that have been and are not,  
Though I was with thee, almost turn'd to stone,  
Here, where I pin'd for twenty years before  
Thy coming."

BOTHWELL.

" Thirty years a prisoner !  
Here, did'st thou say ?"

RHINVALT.

" Aye, thirty years, and more.—  
My wife !—oh, never may I look on her !  
My children !"

BOTHWELL.

" Did'st thou spill man's blood ? or why ?"

RHINVALT.

" I spilt man's blood, in battle.—Oh, no more,  
Liberty, shall I breathe thy air, on high  
Where the cloud travels, or along the shore  
When the wave frowns, like patriot sworn to die !—

I met th' oppressors of my native land,  
(Wide wav'd their plumes o'er Norway's wilds afar,)  
I met them, breast to breast, and hand to hand,  
O'ercome, not vanquish'd, in th' unequal war :  
And this is Freedom's grave."

BOTHWELL.

" Freedom ? Thou fool,  
Deserving chains ! Freedom ? a word, to scare  
The sceptred babe. Of thy own dream thou tool  
And champion, white in folly ! from me far  
Be rant like thine, of sound a senseless jar."

RHINVALT.

" Say, who art thou that rav'st of murder'd kings,  
And dar'st, before her champion vow'd, profane  
The name of freedom ? long-forgotten things  
To my soul beckon, and my hand would fain  
(Stung by thy venom) grasp a sword again  
In battle with these tyrants !—gone ?—alas !  
'Tis the death-rattle in the throat—his pain  
Draws to a close—again ?—dark spirit pass !"

## BOTHWELL.

“ Lift, lift me up ! that on my burning brain  
The pallid light may shine ! and let me see,  
Oncemore, the ocean—thanks!—hail, placid deep!—  
Oh, the cold light is comfort ! and to me  
The freshness of the breeze comes, like sweet sleep  
To him whose tears his painful pillow steep !—  
When last I saw those billows, they were red.  
Mate of my dungeon ! know'st thou why I weep ?  
My chariot, and my war horse, and my bed,  
Ocean before me swells, in all his glory spread ”

## VI.

“ Lovely ! still lovely, nature !—and a line  
Of quivering beams, athwart the wavy space,  
Runs, like a beauteous road to realms divine,  
Ending, where sea and stooping heaven embrace.  
Crisp'd with glad smiles is ocean's aged face ;  
Gem'd are the fingers of his wrinkled hand ;  
Like glistening fishes, in the wanton race,  
The little waves leap, laughing, to the land,

Light following light, an everlasting chase.—  
Lovely, still lovely !—Chaste moon, is thy beam  
Now laid on Jedburgh's mossy walls asleep,  
Where Mary pin'd for me ? or dost thou gleam  
O'er Stirling, where I first, in transport deep,  
Kiss'd her bless'd hand, when Darnley bade her weep ?  
Or o'er Linlithgow, and the billows blue,  
Where (captured on the forest-waving steep)  
She almost fear'd my love, so dear and true ?  
Or on that sad field, where she could but look,  
Adieu ?”

## VII.

## RHINVALT.

“ Weep on ! if thou, indeed, art he whose fame  
Hath pierc'd th' oblivion even of this tomb  
Where life is buried, and whose fearful name  
Amazement loves to speak, while o'er thy doom,  
Trembling, he weeps. *Did* she, whose charms make  
tame  
All other beauty, Scotland's matchless queen,

Creation's wonder, on that wither'd frame,  
Enamour'd smile ? sweet tears there are, I ween ;  
Speak then of her, where tears are shed more oft  
than seen."

## VIII.

BOTHWELL.

" Perhaps, the artist might, with cunning hand,  
Mimic the morn on Mary's lip of love ;  
And fancy might before the canvas stand,  
And deem he saw the unreal bosom move.  
But who could paint her heavenly soul, which glows  
With more than kindness ? the soft thoughts that  
rove  
Over the moonlight of her heart's repose ?  
The wish to hood the falcon, spare the dove,  
Destroy the thorn, and multiply the rose ?  
Oh, had'st thou words of fire, thou could'st not paint  
My Mary, in her majesty of mind,  
Expressing half the queen, and half the saint !  
Her fancy, wild as pinions of the wind,

Or sky-ascending eagle, that looks down,  
Calm, on the homeless cloud he leaves behind ;  
Yet beautiful, as freshest flower, full-blown,  
That bends, beneath the midnight dews reclin'd ;  
Or yon resplendent path, o'er ocean's slumber  
thrown !”

## IX.

“ ’Twas such a night—oh, ne’er, bless’d thought,  
depart !—

When Mary utter’d first, in words of flame,  
The love, the guilt, the madness of her heart,  
While on my bosom burn’d her cheek of shame.  
Thy blood is ice, and, therefore, thou wilt blame  
The queen, the woman, the adulterous wife,  
The hapless and the fair !—oh, but her name  
Needs not thy mangling ! her disastrous life  
Needs not thy curse ! spare, slanderer, spare her  
fame !—

Then wore the heavens, as now, the clouded veil ;  
Yet mark’d I well her tears, and that wan smile  
So tender, so confiding, whose sweet tale,

By memory told, can, even now, beguile  
My spirit of its gloom ! for then the pale  
Sultana of the night her form display'd,  
Pavilion'd in the pearly clouds afar,  
Like brightness sleeping, or a naked maid  
In virgin charms unrivall'd ; while each star,  
Astonish'd at her beauty, seem'd to fade,  
Each planet, envy-stung, to turn aside,  
Veiling their blushes with their golden hair.—(2)  
Oh ! moment, rich in transport ; love and pride,  
Big, too, with woe, with terror, with despair !  
While, wrestling thus, I strive to choak my groan,  
And, what I cannot shun, may learn to bear ;  
*That* moment is immortal, and my own !  
Fate from my grasp *that* moment cannot tear !  
*That* moment for an age of torture might atone !”

## X.

“ Poor Rizio of the flute, whom few bewail,  
Worth Mary's tears, was well worth Darnley's hate.  
Jealous again ? Why, who could e'er prevail,  
Monarch or slave, in conflict with his fate ?

Behold the King of ———. Hear it not, chaste night!—

King! keep no monkey that has got a tail!  
In nought, but things emasculate, delight!  
Let no fly touch her—lest it be a male!  
And, like the devil, infest a paradise in spite!"

## XI.

"Pride, without honour? body, without soul!  
The heartless breast a brainless head implies?  
If men are mad, when passion scorns control,  
And self-respect, with shame and virtue, flies,  
Darnley hath long been mad.—Thou coxcomb rude!  
Thou reptile, shone on by an angel's eyes!  
Intemperate brute, with meanest thoughts imbued!  
Dunghill! would'st thou the sun monopolize?  
Would'st *thou* have Mary's love? for what? Ingratitude."

## XII.

"The quivering flesh, though torture-torn, may live;  
But souls, once deeply wounded, heal no more:

And deem'st thou that scorn'd woman can forgive ?  
Darnley, thou dream'st, but not as heretofore !  
Mary's feign'd smile, assasin-like, would gore ;  
There is a snake beneath her sorrowing eye ;  
The crocodile can weep : with bosom frore,  
O'er thy sick bed, she heaves a traitorous sigh :  
Ah ! do not hope to live ! she knows that thou shalt  
die."

## XIII.

" Yet Mary wept for Darnley, while she kiss'd  
His murderer's cheek at midnight. Sad was she ;  
And he, who then had seen her, would have miss'd  
The rose, that was not where it wont to be,  
Or marvell'd at its paleness. None might see  
The heart, but on the features there was woe.  
Then put she on a mask, and gloomily,  
For dance and ball prepar'd, arose to go :  
' Spare, spare my Darnley's life !' she said, but  
mean'd she so ?"

## XIV.

“ Now bends the murderer.—Mark his forehead fell!

What says the dark deliberation there?—

Now bends the murderer.—Hark!—it is a knell!—

Hark!—sound or motion? ’Twas his cringing hair.

Now bends the murderer.—Wherefore doth he start?

’Tis silence, silence that is terrible!

When *he* hath business, silence should depart,

And maniac darkness, borrowing sounds from hell,

Suffer him not to hear his throbbing heart!—

Now bends the murderer o’er the dozing king,

Who lies, like o’ergorg’d serpent, motionless,

Drunken with wine, a seeming-senseless thing.

Yet his eyes roll with dreadful consciousness,

Thickens his throat in impotent distress,

And his voice strives for utterance, while that wretch

Doth, on his royal victim’s bosom, press

His foot, preparing round the neck to stretch

The horrible cord. Lo, dark as th’ alpine vetch,

Stares his wide-open, blood-shot, bursting eye,

And on the murderer flashes vengeful fire;

While the black visage, in dire agony,

Swells, like a bloated toad that dies in ire,

And quivers into fixedness! On high  
Raising the corse, forth into th' moonlight air  
The staggering murderer bears it silently.  
Lays it on earth, sees the fix'd eye-ball glare,  
And turns, affrighted, from the lifeless stare.  
Ho! fire the mine! and let the house be rent  
To atoms; that dark guile may say to fear,  
' Ah, dire mischance! mysterious accident!  
Ah, would it were explain'd! ah, would it were!'  
Up, up the rushing, red volcano went,  
And wide o'er earth, and heaven, and ocean flash'd,  
Like torrent of earth-lightnings skyward sent;  
O'er heaven, earth, sea, the dread explosion crash'd;  
Then, clattering far, the downward fragments  
dash'd.

Roar'd the rude sailor o'er th' illumin'd sea,  
' Hell is in Scotland!' shudder'd Roslin's hall;  
Low'd the scar'd heifer on the distant lea;  
Trembled the city; shriek'd the festival;  
Paus'd the pale dance from his delighted task;  
Quak'd every masker of the splendid ball;  
Rais'd hands unanswer'd questions seem'd to ask;

And there was one who lean'd against the wall,  
Close pressing to her face, with hand convuls'd, her  
mask."

## XV.

" And night was *after* that, but *blessed* night  
Was never more ! for thrilling voices cried  
To th' dreaming sleep, on th' watcher's pale affright,  
' Who murder'd Darnley ? who the match applied ?  
Did Hepburn murder Darnley ?'—' Fool !' replied,  
Accents responsive, fang'd with scorpion sting,  
In whispers faint, while all was mute beside,  
' 'Twas the queen's husband that did kill the king.'  
And o'er the murderer's soul swept horror's freezing  
wing."

## XVI.

## RHINVALT.

" Terrific ! but untrue ? *Have* such things been ?  
Thy looks say, aye ! and dire are they to me.  
Unhappy king ! and more unhappy queen !  
But who the murderer ?"

BOTHWELL.

“ What is that to thee ?

Think'st thou I kill'd him ? Come but near my chain,

Thou base suspecter of scath'd misery !

And I will dash the links into thy brain,

And lay thee (champion of the cant be free !)

There, for thine insolence ! never to rise again.”

## XVII.

RHINVALT.

“ Alas, how far'st thee now ? Darkness hath chas'd

The dreadful paleness from thy face ; thine eye,

Upturn'd, displays its white ; thy cheek is laced

With quivering, tortuous folds ; thy lip, awry,

Snarls, as thou tear'st the straw ; the speechless storm

Frowns on thy brow, where drops of agony

Stand, thick and bead-like ; and, while all thy form

Is crumpled with convulsion, threat'ningly

Thou breathest, smiting th' air, and writhing like a  
worm.”

## XVIII.

BOTHWELL.

“ Treason ! in arms ?—Sirs, ye are envious all.  
To Mary’s marriage did ye not consent ?  
Do you deny your signatures ? this scrawl  
Of your vile names ? True, I do not repent  
That I divorc’d my wife, to wed the queen ;  
True, I hate Mar ; true, I scorn Huntly’s bawl ;  
True, I am higher now than I have been,—  
And will remain so, though your heads should fall.  
Craig, of the nasal twang, that pray’st so well !  
Glencairn, of th’ icy eye, and tawny hide !  
If I am prouder than the prince of hell,  
Are ye all meanness that ye have no pride ?  
My merit is my crime. I love my sword,  
And that high sin for which the angels fell ;  
But still agrees my action with my word ;  
That your’s does not so, let rebellion tell.—  
Submit ! or perish here ! or elsewhere—by the cord.”

## XIX.

“ My comrades, whose brave deeds my heart attests,  
Be jocund !—But, ah, see their trembling knees !

Their *eyes* are vanquish'd—not by th' tossing crests,—  
But by yon rag, the pestilence of the breeze, (3)  
Painted with villanous horror ! In their breast,  
Ardour and manliness make now with fear  
A shameful treaty, casting all behests  
That honour loves, into th' inglorious rear.  
By heaven, their cowardice hath sold us here !"—  
“ Ha ! dastards terror-quell'd, as by a charm,  
What ! steal ye from the field ? ”—“ My sword for  
thee,

Mary ! and courage for his cause ! *this* arm  
Shall now decide the contest ! ”—Can it be ?  
Did Lindsay claim the fight ? and still lives he ?  
He lives, and I to say it. Hell's black night  
Lowr'd o'er my soul, and Darnley scowl'd on  
me,

And Mary would not let her coward fight,  
But bade him barter all for infamy ;  
Dishonour'd yet unburied ! Morton's face  
Wrinkled with insult ; while, with cover'd brow,  
Bravest Kirkaldy mourn'd a foe's disgrace ;  
And Murray's mean consent was mutter'd low.

Pale, speechless, Mary wept, almost asham'd  
Of him she mourn'd. Flash'd o'er my cheek the glow  
Of rage against myself; and undefam'd,  
Worse than my reputation, and not slow,  
I left my soul behind, and fled in wordless woe."

## XX.

" Then ocean was my home, and I became  
Outcast of human kind, making my prey  
The pallid merchant; and my wither'd name  
Was leagued with spoil, and havock, and dismay.  
Fear'd, as the lightning-fiend, on steed of flame,  
The Arab of the sky. And from that day  
Mary I saw no more. Sleepless desire  
Wept; but *she* came not, even in dreams, to say,  
With sorrowing looks of love, (until this night,)  
" Expire !"

## XXI.

## RHINVALT.

" A troubled dream thy changeful life hath been  
Of storm and splendour. Girt with awe and power,

A thane illustrious ; married to a queen ;  
Obey'd, lov'd, flatter'd ; blasted in an hour ;  
A homeless homicide ; a fugitive  
O'er earth, to thee a waste without a flower ;  
A pirate on the ocean, doom'd to live  
Like the dark osprey ! Could Fate sink thee lower ?  
Defeated, captured, dungeon'd, in this tower  
A raving maniac !”

BOTHWELL.

“ Ah, what next ? the gloom  
Of rayless fire, eternal, o'er the foam  
Of torment, uttering curses, and the boom  
That wails through horror's everlasting home ?  
Woe, without hope ? immortal wakefulness ?  
The brow of tossing agony ? the gloam  
Of flitting fiends, who, with taunts pitiless,  
Talk of lost honour, rancorous, as they roam  
Thro' night, whose vales no dawn shall ever bless ?—  
Accursed who outlives his fame !—thou scene  
Of my last conflict, where the captive's chain  
Made me acquainted with despair ! serene

Ocean, thou mock'st my bitterness of pain,  
For thou, too, saw'st me vanquish'd, yet not slain !  
Oh, that my heart's blood had distain'd the wave,  
That I had plunged, never to rise again,  
And sought, in thy profoundest depths, a grave,  
Where calmness cannot hear, or storm, or battle,  
rave!"

## XXII.

" White billow, know'st thou Scotland ? did thy wet  
Foot ever spurn the shell on her lov'd strand ?  
There hast thou stoop'd the sea-weed grey to fret ?  
Or glaze the pebble with thy crystal hand ?  
I am of Scotland. Dear to me the sand  
That sparkles where my infant days were nurs'd !  
Dear is the vilest weed of that wild land  
Where I have been so happy, so accurs'd !  
Oh, tell me, hast thou seen my lady stand  
Upon the moonlight shore, with troubled eye,  
Looking towards Norway ? did'st thou gaze on her ?  
And did she speak of one far thence, and sigh ?  
Oh, that I were, with thee, a passenger

To Scotland, the bless'd Thule, with a sky  
Changeful like woman ! would, ah, would I were !  
But vainly hence my frantic wishes fly.—  
Who reigns at Holyrood ? Is Mary there ?  
And does she sometimes shed, for him once lov'd, a  
tear ?”

## XXIII.

“ Farewell, my heart's divinity ! To kiss  
Thy sad lip into smiles of tenderness ;  
To worship at that stainless shrine of bliss ;  
To meet th' Elysium of thy warm caress ;  
To be the prisoner of thy tears ; to bless  
Thy dark eye's weeping passion ; and to hear  
The word, the sigh, soul-ton'd, or accentless,  
Murmur for one so vile, and yet so dear ;  
Alas, 'tis mine no more !—Thou hast undone me,  
Fear !”

## XXIV.

“ Champion of Freedom !—pray thee, pardon me  
My laughter, if I now can laugh ! in hell

They laugh not. He who thus addresses thee  
*Is* Hepburn Earl of Bothwell.—Hark! my knell!  
The death-owl shrieks it —Ere I cease to fetch  
These pantings for the shroud, tell me, oh, tell!  
Believ'st thou God?—Blow on a dying wretch,  
Blow, wind that com'st from Scotland!—Fare thee  
well!

The owl shrieks—I shall have no other passing-bell.”

## XXV.

As from the chill, bright ice the sunbeam flies,  
So (but reluctant) life's last light retires  
From the cold mirror of his closing eyes:  
He bids the surge, adieu!—falls back—expires.

## RHINVALT.

“No passing-bell? yea, I that bell will be;  
Pale night shall hear the requiem of my sighs;  
My woe-worn heart hath still some tears for thee;  
Nor will thy shade the tribute sad despise.  
Lost brother, fare thee well!—here scath'd ambi-  
tion lies!”

## XXVI.

Thus, o'er the dead the dungeon'd mourner spake,  
Freedom, thy Champion, with the locks of snow !  
Nor other accent from his bosom brake ;  
But, motionless, he look'd, in silent woe,  
On him who, at his feet, so darkly slept.  
Soon, like heaven's voice, by sorrow heard below,  
A solemn calm upon his spirit crept ;  
Back from the corse he drew, with footstep slow,  
In awe, almost in dread ! and, distant gazing, wept.

## NOTES TO BOTHWELL.

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(1) *As of a female voice that mimick'd woe.*

An allusion to the hypocrisy of Mary's deadliest foe, Queen Elizabeth.

(2) *While each star,*

*Astonish'd at her beauty, seem'd to fade—*

A friend of mine has objected to this passage as unnatural and inflated ; but I think he did not make sufficient allowance for the excited state of the speaker's mind.

(3) *Their eyes are vanquish'd—not by the tossing crests,—  
But by yon ray, the pestilence of the breeze—*

After the flight of Bothwell, Mary was conducted to Edinburgh, by her rebellious subjects, who bore before her a flag, on which was painted the dead body of Darnley, with the prince kneeling beside it, and the words, “ Revenge our cause, O Lord ! ” This flag, it is supposed, had been not a little useful in disposing the followers of Bothwell to flight.

“ Of all our senses, the eyes are the first vanquished in battle.”—GIBBON.



## SECOND NUPTIALS.

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### ADVERTISEMENT.

IN this book it is related, how William Bray deserted his wife; how Mathew Hall won her heart, by talking of her husband until she wept; how she swam a drake with her tears, and married Mathew; how William Bray returned to his wife, after an absence of ten years; how she took him for the Devil, and did her best to scratch his eyes out! and how the man had his mare again, and all was well.

## INTRODUCTION.

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### I.

OH ! thou, who tak'st thy smiling seat  
Close by the fire, where rustics meet,  
When toil is done, to feed on ale,  
And join the laugh, or tell the tale,  
While haste the hours, by pleasure speeded,  
And darkness frowns without, unheeded !  
When, next, oh ! night, the genial powers,  
Sate with drink, not crown'd with flowers,  
Assemble at a tinker's wedding ;  
May I be there, to see the bedding !  
And when thou wakest at country fair,  
To mark the feats of baited bear ;  
Or pugilistic battle's rage ;  
Or showman's feats, on lofty stage,  
Around which, like th' Athenians old,  
Crowd Albion's toil-strung peasants bold,

To hear, or stare at, something new ;  
Lady of Laughter ! wake me, too.

## II.

Oh ! thou, who, in th' eccentric maze  
Of motion, wedded to sweet sound,  
Lov'st powerful beauty's roseate blaze,  
The march of music, and the bound  
Of youthful health, an angel tall,  
Th' enchantress of the splendid hall !  
When, next, oh ! nymph, the Graces meet,  
To frolic on harmonious feet,  
And, through the heaven of smiles, serene,  
The stately dance moves, like a queen ;  
Then, to that loveliest scene of night,  
Where Emma beams in looks of light,  
With eye of life, and step of air,  
Lady of Grace ! with me repair.

## III.

Art thou not she, assigned to lead  
The lover o'er the moonlight mead,  
With her, his life of life decreed,

When all around, on plain and hill,  
Save the far-moaning waterfall,  
Save their own beating hearts, is still ;  
While every leaf with dew is gemm'd,  
And passion is their heaven, their all,  
And wealth and worlds roll by, contemn'd ?  
Then, when, unseen, they fly to thee ;  
When nought, but conscious night, is near ;  
What see'st thou then ? what none may see :  
What hear'st thou then ? what none may hear.  
Saint of the heart ! to thee, to thee  
Shall bow the might of poesy.  
Oh ! Lady of the starry stole,  
Rich in the secrets of the soul !  
To thee shall rise th' impassion'd song,  
Devoutly sweet, divinely strong ;  
And ne'er shall bard inspired refuse  
To crown thee mistress of the muse,  
To wear thy bonds, to scorn the free,  
Lady of Love ! and kneel to thee.

## SECOND NUPTIALS.

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And, sudden, rush'd into the hall  
A man, whose aspect and attire  
Startled the circle by the fire.

SCOTT.

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### I.

LONG since, to th' wood return'd the crow ;  
Don, bounding o'er his bank, is loud ;  
And thick above the melting snow,  
Night's blackness hides the pouring cloud.  
No azure islands heaven, no star  
O'er Thrybergh's grey oaks peeps afar,  
Piercing the deluge of the sky,  
Through which the blast wades drearily.  
But on the hill, a blaze with light,  
Deserted Mary's cottage gleams,

And there the elms, distinct and bright,  
Wave fast their bare arms in the beams.  
Is this the widow's wedding night ?  
'Tis now ten years since William went,  
The slave of jealous discontent,  
To fight the Yankees, in despite,  
Rather than stay at home and fight ;  
And now six months are passed, or more,  
Since Mathew Hall arriv'd, and told  
That William's limbs lie stiff and cold,  
On wintry Champlain's forest shore.  
And does the widow wed again ?  
Oh ! widowhood is weary pain,  
Of ills the worst that can befall !  
And, loving him, as he loves her,  
Say, does she wed the messenger  
Of late good tidings, Mathew Hall ?

## II.

The scar'd fox in the coppice hoar,  
Hears the dance shake the oaken floor ;

Joy revels on the green hill's side ;  
And Mary is again a bride.  
As wave on Canklow's forehead fair  
Th' autumnal maple's locks of gold,  
In many a curl, her flaxen hair,  
Above the flowing tear, is roll'd.  
Sad ? and a bride ! A mourning bride,  
She sits her new-espous'd beside,  
And her tears bathe his hand the while !  
What may such ill-tim'd tears betide ?  
Or, is she far too bless'd to smile ?

### III.

The fiddle's shriek was superseded :  
The tale, the joke, the laugh succeeded,  
And scandal stoop'd at folly's ear.  
Soft-touching, with his finger's end,  
Her, who, erewhile, was Mary Bray,  
Said Mathew then unto his dear :  
“ How strange that my expected friend  
Came not to give the bride away !  
What stays his coming ? cans't thou say ? ”

## IV.

“ The flood,” she answer’d, “ is abroad,  
And peril haunts the buried road.  
The ferryman hath left his boat,  
Which hath not, this day, earn’d a groat,  
And now in Mexbro, with his wench,  
Topsy, he sits on the alehouse bench.”

## V.

“ Yet,” then said he, with look of fear,  
“ I would, I would, my friend were here !  
For much indeed—now mark thou me !—  
Imports his coming, love, to thee :  
He is a man of mystery !  
And come he will, or soon, or late,  
To question thee with words of fate.  
Tell him no lies, my loving mate !  
For, on thy answers truth depend  
The weal of husband, wife, and friend.”

## VI.

“ Thou shalt be well obey’d,” replied,  
While faster stream’d her tears, the bride.

Then thus, once more, spake Mathew Hall !

“ A wedding ? or a funeral ?

Weeping ! and on thy wedding day ?

Weeping ! and still for William Bray ?

By heaven thou hast shed tears for him

Enough old Martha's drake to swim !

Of this no more, no more, I pray !—

Ho ! where is now the blasant Muse ?

Is she to scare the pigs afraid ?

A song ! a song ! nor man, nor maid,

Who hopes to wed, to sing refuse.

But pensive Harry shall sing first,

The cross'd in love, the sorrow-nurs'd.

Harry, thou ne'er did'st rightly pray

Till sulky Sarah jilted thee.

Religion, ancient sages say,

Religion, from the realms above,

Came down, to soothe the mourner, love ;

And passion then was piety.

Indulge me, Harry, in my whim—

(Solemn th' occasion !) sing a hymn ;

A hymn, a psalm, a—any thing ;  
Ev'n call it what thou wilt—but sing !”

## VII.

Pensive and pale, arose the youth,  
The child of feeling and of truth,  
And modestly, and yet with pride,  
His ancient fiddle laid aside,  
Which not its weight in gold could buy.  
True, it was clumsy to the eye ;  
True, its dark side some cracks display'd ;  
Yet was there more than music in't ;  
For why ? 'twas by his grand-sire made,  
The Genius, fam'd so far and wide,  
Th' inventor of the butter-print !  
The worm of death was in his breast.  
Sarah, the faithless, met his eye,  
Which grief and mute reproach express'd ;  
Then, gazing, self-condemn'd, on earth,  
She heav'd, or seem'd to heave, a sigh ;  
But, lo, she saw the hairy hide  
Of big-boned Jacob at her side,

Her amorous mate ! and, in its birth,  
The infant, frail repentance, died.  
At first, the Minstrel's voice was low,  
As whisper'd prayer of fear, or woe ;  
But soon, distinct, and deep, and clear,  
The soul-felt accents met the ear,  
Full of that fervour of the heart  
Which bids all earthly toys depart,  
Taught by calamity to scorn  
All that of human pride is born.

## VIII.

## THE LOVER'S SONG.

“ Scarcely from Mary's cheek, where bliss  
In tears and blushes lay,  
Had William kiss'd, with transport's kiss,  
Love's blissful tear away,  
When, o'er her murdered sister's bier,  
He saw her shed a wilder tear.

“ Fast, fast, into the new-made grave,  
Fast fell the melting snow ;

But scarce had Winter ceas'd to rave  
O'er her who slept below,  
When Mary mourn'd her William fled !  
And then she mourn'd her William dead !

“ Ah, life is but a tearful stream,  
On which floats joy, the flower !  
Deeply we plunge, and rise, and scream,  
And strive, with all our power,  
To grasp the bright weed gliding nigh,  
And snatch, and miss, and sink, and die.

“ The young bride wept ; the sister wept  
Where Ann serenely sleeps ;  
The widow wept, when William slept ;  
The wedded widow weeps !  
Ah, earth's frail love is woe, is woe !  
Did not thy sister find it so ?

“ And not to soothe wild passion came  
Religion from above :

Speak not, in scorn, her holy name ;

Religion's self is love—

Love, with no poison in her kiss ;

And, if she weeps, her tear is bliss.

“ Be still my heart ! soon shalt thou be—

Beneath thy mother's mould ;

There is a bed of rest for thee,

Where Ann reposes cold :

The turf sleeps sweetly on her breast ;

And thou (but not like it) shalt rest.”

### IX.

Ended his ditty sadly sweet ;

Resum'd his fiddle and his seat ;

Applauded by the noiseless tear,

Although no plaudit met his ear ;

Sigh'd he, the meekest child of woe.

His cheek, late pallid as the snow,

Now burn'd with feeling's hectic glow,

(Consumption's banner there display'd,)

Beautiful, as a dying maid ;

Or, blushing merit in distress ;  
Or, like the rose, the splendour less,  
Oh, not the white one, but the pale,  
That droops, the mourner of the vale,  
Carnation'd faintly, in the gale !

## X.

“ My drooping Mary !” Mathew said,  
“ I like this lay of Harry's well ;  
Though not by practis'd poet made,  
(He's not, like Charles, there, one of th' trade,)  
'Tis sad, and true. But can'st thou tell  
What of the murderer, John, became ?  
Well may'st thou tremble at his name.  
Mary, I slew the accursed man,  
The wretch, who killed thy sister Ann.  
We met—'twas in the ranks of death,—  
With set teeth, and suspended breath :  
On me the conscious traitor scowl'd ;  
On him my startled eye was rowl'd ;  
He rush'd to slay, but paus'd aghast ;  
Through him my cranshing bayonet pass'd ;

He shriek'd, and fell! with dreadful stare  
He lay, and look'd a hopeless prayer.  
I, shuddering, turn'd—I could not bear  
To look upon the horror there."

## XI.

Then, deeply skill'd in Ford and Quarles,  
Up rose the village Homer, Charles,  
A wight uncouth, unshav'd, unclean,  
In stature tall, of visage mean,  
To sing, or say, and sans persuasion,  
His poem, written for th' occasion.  
Contempt rode in his half shut eye,  
And, on his curl'd lip, vanity ;  
While, from the depth of lungs up drawn,  
Preluding to his song, a yawn,  
From mouth to mouth, with solemn boom,  
Went in procession round the room.

## XII.

## THE POET'S SONG.

" Methought, I wander'd long and far, and slept  
On purple heath flowers, while the black stream crept

Moaning, beside me, o'er its bed of stone :  
But soon before my troubled spirit pass'd  
A dream of unclimb'd hills, and forests vast,  
And sea-like lakes, and shadowy rivers lone.

“ And there, a man, whose youth seem'd palsied eld,  
Mov'd, slow and faint, by wildering thought impell'd;  
Yet beam'd the sorrow of his gentle eye,  
With a sweet calmness, on the mountain's hoar,  
And the magnificent Flora, and the shore  
Of shipless waves, that swell'd to meet the sky.”

“ And, oh,” he said, “ falsehood, that truth-like  
seem'd !  
I lov'd, and thought I was belov'd—I dream'd,—  
Who hath had joys, and who hath woes, like mine?  
The worm that gnaws the soul, hath found me out.  
Can th' lightning blast like thee, thou withering  
doubt ?

Suspicion ! hath the wolf a fang like thine ?”

“ Farewell for ever !—and, oh, thank'd be thou,  
Realm of the roaring surge, that part'st us now !

And hail, ye pathless swamps, ye unsail'd floods!—  
*Thou* owest nought, thou glistening snake, to me ;  
Hiss ! if thou wilt ! I ask not love of thee.

And then he plung'd into the night of woods."

### XIII.

" A Milton !" loudly Mathew cried ;  
" A Milton !" ten harsh throats replied ;  
And Charles look'd round, with scornful air,  
Prouder than Punch at country fair :  
While Jacob, by th' applauding laugh  
Rous'd from his wonted stupor, gaz'd  
On poet, groom, and all, amaz'd.  
But bride's maid Nancy's well-timed tear,  
More eloquent than words by half,  
Paid to his powers, so loudly prais'd,  
Applause, the sweetest and most dear.  
The song had pathos ! and she slept  
Till it was ended ; then she wept—  
It was a way she had, a whim.  
Unseen, he thought, for sly was he  
(Yet not, perchance, more sly than she)

He watch'd, and saw her—prying thing!—  
Pass the rich bride-cake through the ring;  
Doubtless, in hope to dream of him!

## XIV.

Then Mathew to his umber'd cheek,  
Acquainted long with sun and wind,  
Press'd drooping Mary's forehead meek;  
And, "Bride!" he said, "now, now a treat!  
(Nay, drive the mourner from thy mind!)  
After the Epic, somewhat long,  
Of our judicious man of song,  
(Thy William's friend, also a prophet  
That weeping love would soon tire of it,)  
Give us a ballad short and sweet,  
And, if more gay than sad, no worse;  
Sadness—like dulness—is a curse."

## XV.

He ended, sneering at the poet,  
Who, although stung, seem'd not to know it:  
She rose not from her Mathew's side,  
But met his warm kiss, and complied.

## XVI.

## THE BRIDE'S SONG.

Tune, "*Ye banks and braes o' bonny Doon.*"

"The frost was crisping o'er the Don;  
Along his banks stray'd Ann with John;  
The moon look'd through the rustling firs;  
Her lover's hand was clasp'd in her's.  
Oft look'd he backward, as he talk'd;  
Towards Sprosbro's hazels slow they walk'd;  
And, o'er the valley, lone, and low,  
Frown'd, dark, the age of Conisbro.

"To-morrow, thou wilt wed me," said  
The ill-starr'd maiden, half afraid:

"And, when the rose and woodbine here  
Shall blush through morning's dewy tear,  
The unborn babe, begot in sin,  
That, hapless, leaps my womb within,  
Shall smile on thee, and on thy bride,  
And I will smile on him, with pride."

“ But she, too well, alas, he knew,  
Nor rose, nor woodbine more, should view !  
And, as she bent his hand to kiss,  
He aim’d a blow, and did not miss,  
But plung’d his knife into her side,  
And whelm’d her, shrieking, in the tide :  
Then, as with lightning wing’d, fled he,  
To join the Yankees o’er the sea.

“ Thine eye is clos’d, Ann ! not in sleep,—  
Thou never more shalt wake to weep :  
Cold is thy brow, and cold thy bed ;  
The morning from thy cheek is fled ;  
Thy blood is ice, thy pains are o’er,  
And even thy dark wound bleeds no more :  
Tears cannot heal thy wounded name,  
But death hath quench’d thy burning shame.

“ They said the babe leap’d in thy womb !  
That unborn baby shares thy tomb ;—  
Where the torn heart is low at rest ;  
The rose is with’ring on thy breast,

And, emblem of thy sex and woe,  
The lily in thine hand of snow.  
Short was thy path, and strewed with pain—  
But, sister, we shall meet again !”

## XVII.

She ceas'd, but not the flowing tear ;  
Nor was she then sole weeper there.  
What Mathew felt he would not own,  
But cough'd, to keep the woman down ;  
Nor did he vainly cough, or long ;  
Rather than weep, he sung a song.

## XVIII.

## THE BRIDEGROOM'S SONG.

“ A widow, who, dwelling on ocean's wild shore,  
Had mourn'd her dead husband six months, perhaps,  
more,  
Saw a gallant approaching, with comical air :  
He touch'd her soft hand, while he swore she was  
fair ;

He talk'd of her husband—she could not but cry ;  
Then he took up her apron, to wipe her sad eye,  
But, wondering to see it so suddenly dry,  
Said, “ Come, kiss me !” and—What could she do,  
but comply ?”

## XIX.

He ceas'd, and from the room withdrew,  
While Mary blush'd shame's deepest hue,  
And, like a daisy bent with dew,  
Look'd, in confusion, on the ground.  
Fast then the brimful horn went round.  
Who miss'd the bridegroom, save the bride ?  
An hour had pass'd ; he came not back :  
She writh'd, like victim stretch'd on rack,  
And twitch'd, as if on wasps she sate,  
Her wriggling bum from side to side.  
And now the ale in Jacob's pate  
Confused his brain with eddying swirl :  
Snake-like, began he to uncurl.  
“ The bridegroom,” snigger'd he, “ is gone,  
And shall the bride sit there alone ?”

He rose, and placed her on his knee ;  
While, in the hell of jealousy,  
'That almost turn'd her blood to tinder,  
Grim Sarah smok'd, like steak on cinder,  
And froth'd, and fired, with ire and heat.  
But Mary, who disliked her seat,  
Dealt on his mouth and ruby nose,  
With Amazonian fist, her blows,  
And laid him, bleeding, at her feet.  
Oh, holy wedded love ! divine  
Discord in unison ! 'tis thine  
Our hope, our stay, our shield to prove,  
When ills assail ! and, wedded love,  
When tender Sarah saw his blood,  
She felt thy power, as good wife should.  
Hideous, she rush'd to claw the victor ;  
But Mary stepp'd aside, and kick'd her ;  
And Sarah prone on Jacob fell,  
Who wish'd her (so th' unmarried tell,  
And so he fondly said) in hell,—  
Meaning that pillow peaceable,

Where, calm at last, the married sleep,  
Of whom, and second nuptials, too,  
The widow'd think the lone night through,  
And, finding joy in sorrow, weep.

## XX.

Then Mary to the window drew,  
And, hid behind the curtain blue,  
Look'd out into the dismal night.  
Gone was the universal white ;  
Wild heaven with skurrying clouds was spread ;  
And through the darkness rush'd the light  
Oft, as the wan moon, overhead,  
Like murder chas'd by conscience, fled ;  
And lovely was th' illumin'd cloud,  
As, on the tip of virgin dead,  
The smile that mocks her stainless shroud.  
And, as a maniac bends aghast,  
Smiting his clench'd hands high and fast,  
Did many a huge tree, in the blast  
Wave, crashing loud, his branches vast,  
Between her and the light.

Afar, she saw the river deep,  
And Mexbro, by his side, asleep ;  
And all the snow was in the stream,  
Roaring beneath the fitful beam ;  
But the wild rain had ceas'd to pour.  
Then o'er her heart chill terror crept,  
And fancy, sad enthusiast, wept,  
And heard the distant waters roar.  
“ Did Mathew, on that gloomy shore,  
Where the voic'd billows wail of woe,  
As, dread, in frantic whirls, they flow,  
Seek him, the man of mystery ?  
But little good bodes he to me.  
Ah !—ne'er be that thought realiz'd !—  
Wedded in vain, and vainly priz'd,  
Deep in the wave lies Mathew, drown'd ?”  
She look'd, but vainly look'd around :  
Yet some one mov'd, or seem'd to move,  
She thought, between the house and grove :  
On tiptoe stood the anxious dame !  
But o'er the moon, like envy, came  
Darkness—and all was dread and woe.

Thus, Empress of Britannian bowers,  
The hawthorn shakes her lovely flowers  
Beneath th' half-shaded beam of noon,  
Which, glimmering on the pale wave, soon  
Vanishes with the dying breeze,  
And the cloud deepens o'er the trees,  
While green-isled Morley, dark and still,  
Listens beneath the glooming hill.  
But, while she stood entranc'd in woe,  
The door flew open wide ; and, lo,  
A stranger enter'd ! “ Mathew ? No ! ”  
With clench'd hands, and retracted form,  
Like sapling bent beneath the storm,  
Or statue of Despair, she stood.  
“ Where is thy husband, Mathew Hall ? ”  
Exclaim'd, in seeming sullen mood,  
That age-bent stranger, broad and tall,  
With spade-like beard of reddish grey.  
The bride, who scarce knew what to say,  
Stood mute awhile, then, half afraid,  
“ Art *thou* my husband's friend ? ” she said.

“ I am,” quoth he, with alter’d tone,  
“ His best, his worst, his only one.”  
Forthwith, unask’d, he took his seat ;  
While Jacob, once more on his feet,  
Warbled a stave, with gruntle sweet,  
Such as was used in times pass’d long,  
Ere notes and tunes were known in song.

## XXI.

## JACOB’S SONG.

“ Said young Nell to her husband old,  
While on stout Jem she smil’d ;  
“ Thy back and belly both are cold,  
And time hath thee beguil’d ;  
And Joe, when back won’t warm the bed,  
Nor belly warm the broth,  
Is’t not high time that grace were said ?  
Alack, alack for both !”

## XXII.

Then to the stranger Jacob brought  
The punch he lov’d ; and, at a draught,

The stranger drain'd the vase of bliss.  
"What emptyness in this world is!"  
Sigh'd Jacob, as with drowthy scowl,  
Angry, he ey'd the empty bowl.  
"My thirsty friend! thou canst, I see,  
Make with thine old acquaintance free.  
I hope thou wilt, to bless our ears,  
And melt our eyes in music's tears,  
Honour the wedding with a song,  
Sad as thy phiz, but not so long."  
The reverend man his wrath controll'd,  
And answer'd calmly: "Though I'm old,  
I still have music in my soul."  
And wonder soon, on every face,  
Hearken'd his deep and mellow bass.

## XXIII.

## THE STRANGER'S SONG.

"Star!—brightest thou of all that beam  
O'er nightly hill, on wood and stream!—  
Fair is thy light o'er wilds afar,  
And lovely is thy silence, star!

How calm thou art ! while cloud and forest rave,  
And tempests wildly wing the whirling wave.

“ What hand unseen hath rent thy shroud ?  
Black rolls aloft the broken cloud :  
Lo ! Care walks here, with troubled eye,  
To chase thee through the hurried sky !  
Why ? what art thou ? A world of woe, like this,  
A world of weeping toil, and fleeting bliss,

“ Where wretches curse their hour of birth,  
And whence they eye the distant earth,  
(A star to them, as thou to me,)  
And,—frantic in their misery,—  
Wish they could mount, at once, the reinless wind,  
And leave, at once, their woes and thee behind !

“ Would I were as the dust I tread !  
Welcome, thou cold and wormy bed !  
That me no more might vice enthrall,  
Nor folly tempt to climb and fall,

Nor passion wild her unresisting slave  
Fling, careless, o'er the rock, and wilder'd wave.

“ Then, mother earth! to this sad heart  
Th' envenom'd fang no more would dart!  
And still, with many a cherish'd tear,  
A form of grace might visit here,  
And oft bend o'er my dust, and letter'd stone,  
Like storm-dwarf'd yew tree, mournful and alone.

“ Star! would night's queen then haste to streak,  
Through widow'd locks, a wither'd cheek,  
And fondly, on her forehead fair,  
In shadow, paint her drooping hair?  
Oh! for repose! my soul with woe is press'd  
Down, down to earth, and yearns to be at rest.”

#### XXIV.

He ceas'd. The bride, perturb'd, amaz'd,  
Still on the age-bent stranger gaz'd,  
And felt his accents in her soul.  
Soon his sad gloom became a scowl;

And, " Say, and truly say," he cried,  
" Why thy first husband left thy side?  
And why, in late apostacy,  
Thou hast espous'd a worse than he,  
Who (like the friendless winds, that roam  
O'er heaven's broad desert) hath no home,  
But flies to mourn, yet not to weep,  
While earth to him is, as the cloud  
On which, in vain to slumber bow'd,  
The thunder would, but cannot, sleep?"

## XXV.

" I am, indeed," she said, " bereft  
Of him I lov'd!—but why he left  
His faithful Mary, who shall tell?  
Oh! still I love him, still too well!  
I never gave him cause for flight."

" Except," said he, " a scratch or bite,  
On th' prominent proboscis, or a  
Kick, now and then, i' th' guts."—

" With sorrow,"

Resum'd the nettled bride, " I own  
That, once, I knock'd my husband down ;  
But then, beneath my very nose,  
He kiss'd, when drunk, that gipsy, Rose,  
Who, ever hankering after fellows,  
Thinks all their wives of her are jealous.  
Besides, to make a husband fly,  
That broken noddle, or black eye,  
Is cause *sufficient*, I deny,  
And thee to prove it such defy,  
And would do, wert thou ten feet high ;  
Nor do I know why mine left me.  
Yet oft I beg, on bended knee,  
Heaven's pardon for th' unconscious crime,  
Whate'er the hapless cause might be.  
How slowly pass'd the heavy time !  
At last,—when gone were ten sad years,—  
A stranger found me in my tears,  
And told me, that my William *died*,  
On wintry Champlain's woody side.  
He saw, the stranger saw, and tried

To soothe, with words, my heart's despair.

*He* was not, like my William, fair;

But, underneath a brow of care,

His amber'd cheek was manly brown;

And, o'er his woe-worn features thrown,

Oft pass'd a rapid smile and wild,—

The sweetness of a dreaming child

Mix'd with the warrior's majesty.

And he had been my William's friend,

The soother of his journey's end.

Together had they roam'd the woods,

And cross'd the dread Columbian floods;

Together had they fought and fled,

On Champlain's side together bled;

And there he saw my William die.

With throbbing breast, and flowing eye,

I lov'd, I deeply lov'd, to hear

The stranger talk of one so dear,

Of William's fondness, William's fate,

And late repentance, ah, too late!—

He named me, with his dying breath!

He bless'd me, in the arms of death!

This lock is all he could bequeath,

To her who—oh, those tears of thine,  
Old man, already pardon mine!—  
And welcome still the stranger came;  
And still in dreams I sigh'd his name;  
And still the oft-told tale was sweet;  
And still would he the tale repeat;  
(He was to me even as a brother!)  
And, while our tears in concert stream'd,  
I mourn'd my husband,—so I dream'd,—  
I mourn'd him—till I lov'd another!  
But could my earliest love return,  
My William whom I still will mourn,  
I would for him renounce"—she sigh'd,—  
" Mathew, and all the world beside."

## XXVI.

" Renounce him then, at once for me!"  
Exclaim'd that man of mystery.  
" Dost thou not know me, woman, say?  
Behold thy husband, William Bray!"  
And round her neck his arms he threw,  
And cried, " What now? Why this ado?"  
And kiss'd, as he would kiss her through.

But she cuff'd, kick'd, and bawl'd, " Away!  
Off, dotard, off! or thou shalt rue  
My biting tooth, and tearing nail."  
Then glowr'd she—neither pleas'd, nor civil,—  
Like one who thinks he sees the devil,  
And knows him by his horns and tail.  
" Thou?—thou my husband, William Bray?  
Why thou art, as a badger, grey!"  
Quoth he, " I am, and well I may;  
I have been absent many a day."  
" But," shrilly yell'd she in dismay,  
" Thou art as *ugly* as thou'rt grey,  
With whiskers red, as reynard's tail,  
And square beard, like a windmill sail.—  
Why dost thou still, so goat-like, eye me?—  
Thou William?—Devil, I defy thee."

## XXVII.

She said, and cross'd herself, in fear,  
And surely thought a fiend was near,  
And, trembling, hoped, (for doubts came o'er her,)  
It *was* the devil that stood before her!

Then grinn'd the sage, a slyish grin ;  
And she, to bear suspense unable,  
Flew at him, overturning th' table,  
And seem'd, in tooth and claw, a dragon,  
Resolv'd to leave him not a rag on.  
Lord, what a pickle he was in !  
His bones almost fled out of's skin ;  
For, in a second, the virago  
Had left him scarce a thread to take to.  
And first the long beard left his chin,  
Then fell to earth his cloak so big,  
His cat-skin cap, his worsted wig ;  
And, like enchantress, self-enchanted,  
Gaz'd Mary—on the man she wanted !  
He stoop'd no more like toothless eighty,  
Or porter beneath burden weighty,  
But stood before her strait and young ;  
And locks of darkest auburn hung,  
Cluster'd, above his martial brow,  
While love laugh'd on his lip below.  
Oh, love, thou still play'st queer tricks many,  
Though old and tame, I play not any !

## XXVIII.

“ Twice-wedded widow ! do not bawl—  
Twice woo’d ! twice won ! turn not away—  
Behold thy husband, Mathew Hall !  
Behold thy husband, William Bray !—  
Oh, dearest, and in trouble tried,  
Receive me to thy faithful side !  
Oh, then most constant, when untrue !  
Forgiveness is contrition’s due ;  
Forgive !—and I will quit thee never,  
But spurn suspicion, and for ever,  
Cast o’er thy faults affection’s mist,  
And humbly kiss thy gentle fist.”

## XXIX.

She hung upon his bosom, weak ;  
She look’d the love she could not speak.  
He smil’d the rose back to her cheek :  
“ Thou fond and full heart ! *do* not break.”  
He seal’d with kisses warm her lips ;  
And—as the half-flying redbreast sips

A dewdrop from the lily's breast,  
Then, perching on it, trills his song ;—  
So kiss'd he off her tears, to rest  
Soothing the heart-throb, tortur'd long.  
Like fairy, shod with gossamer,  
Joy, unexpected, came to her,

For pass'd woe to atone.

Her lip lay on his neck embrac'd :  
As if an angel's glance had chas'd

Her darkness, it was gone.

And who shall boast a heroine like mine ?

Not more than woman, yet almost divine,

Minerva-like in battle she appears,

Venus in love, and Niobe in tears ;

Before her Laila, Constance fade to air ;

And ten to nothing ! she shall thrash Gulnare !

### XXX.

Then all said—what they had to say ;

And all shook hands with William Bray,

Save Jacob, who, in drink profound,

Lay stretch'd out huge along the ground.

To earth, and earth's love reconcil'd,  
The broken heart of Harry smil'd,  
Through tears, like those which saints in heaven  
Shed to behold a foe forgiven.

It was, indeed, a glorious wedding !  
Charles, all on fire to write upon it,  
Swore 'twas a subject for a sonnet,  
And, bard-like, in his haste to write,  
Forgot to wish his love good night ;  
But Nancy stay'd to see the bedding.  
And learnedly the learn'd have shown  
The stocking then, once more, was thrown :  
And ancient Night relax'd her brow,  
And felt, 'tis said, she scarce knew how,  
While, with her grey tongue's watery tip,  
She lick'd her greenish gums and lip ;  
And clapp'd her glasses on her nose,  
Right loath a sight o' th' fun to lose ;  
And stoop'd, and star'd, with twinkling eye,  
And crisp'd with smiles her cheek awry,  
Like crumpled dish-clout laid to dry,

And squeez'd her thumb, with gripe uncouth,  
And broke her blue and only tooth ;  
Then thought, like many a matron staid,  
Of many a prank that love had play'd,  
In times gone by, beneath her shade ;  
Forgot her crutch, her age, her pain,  
And liv'd her young years o'er again.

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POEMS.

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## POEMS.

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### FRAGMENT.

THOUGH dark around, and dark before,  
If dark the past, why look behind,  
On pleasures that will please no more,  
Virtues, whose failure stings the mind,  
Abortive deeds, and wishes blind?  
Still comes the fiend, that comes in vain;  
Still shrieks regret on every wind,  
And murders murder'd hope again.  
Remembrance is the urn of pain.

## TO THE MICHAELMAS DAISY.

WEEP, daisy pale of Michaelmas,  
And droop beneath the blast and shower !  
The cloud-shade o'er the waving grass  
Flits ; swiftly comes the stormy hour :  
Widow of summer ! soon the power  
That life abhors, shall strip thee bare,  
And leave thee, 'reft of beauty's dower,  
Without a gem to hang in air.

No more the flame-wing'd moth is seen,  
Hovering o'er flowers, a living gem ;  
Each gnat, and worm, with robe of sheen,  
Droop, for the sun was life to them ;  
The small birds, on the leafless stem,  
Mutely the faded grove bewail ;  
Flora hath lost her diadem,  
And, joyless, sees the blasted vale.

Last of the flowers ! the heavy gale  
That shakes the broad oak's leaves o'er thee—  
Thy deathly hue of purple pale—  
Are sad to hear, and sad to see !  
Ah ! with what pain, what ling'ring, we  
Dwell on those awful words, " The last !"  
Ah ! *hopeless* flower ! thou speak'st to me  
But of despair, the past, the past !

Herald of winter, hark !—the blast,  
That harshly bends thee, seems to say,  
" Earth's glory blooms to fade, how fast !  
A flower, a flash, it hastes away,  
A moment bright, then lost for aye !"  
What is duration but a flower ?  
When shall his last, last leaf decay ?  
Oh ! when shall die Time's final hour ?

## TO THE WOOD ANEMONE.

WHY dost thou close thine eye,  
Demurest mourner, why?  
Say, did the fragrant night-breeze rudely kiss  
Thy drooping forehead fair,  
And press thy dewy hair,  
With amorous touch, embracing all amiss?  
And, therefore, flow'ret meet,  
Glow on thy snowy cheek  
Hues, less to shame, than angry scorn, allied,  
Yet lovely, as the bloom  
Of evening, on the tomb  
Of one who injur'd liv'd, and slander'd died?  
Or, did'st thou fondly meet  
His soft lip Hybla-sweet?  
And, therefore, doth the cold and loveless cloud  
Thy wanton kissing chide?  
And, therefore, would'st thou hide  
Thy burning blush, thy cheek so sweetly bowed?

Or while the daisy slept,  
Say, hast thou wak'd and wept,  
Because thy lord, the lord of love and light,  
Had left thy pensive smile ?  
What western charms beguile  
The fire-hair'd youth, forth from whose eye-lids bright  
Are cast o'er night's deep sky  
Her gems that flame on high ?  
That husband, whose warm glance thy soul reveres,  
No flow'ret of the west  
Detains, on harlot breast;  
The envious cloud withholds him from thy tears.

---

A SKETCH OF ONE WHO CANNOT BE  
CARICATURED.

FRIEND ! when thou walk'st, in majesty, abroad,  
Say, why doth laughter take, with thee, the road ?

Though thy long teeth, like stakes beside th' high-  
way,

Straggling and sharp, are streak'd with greenish  
grey ;

Though bristles arm thine horizontal nose,  
While on thy cheek grow bristles stiff as those ;  
And though thine eyes are where thine ears should  
be ;

Let not derision shake his sides at thee.

Nor, while with bended back, and elbows wide,  
Thou bears't thy bum, on shuffling legs astride,  
Let the girt horseman stop, in mute surprise,  
As if, far off, he smelt thee with his eyes.

---

### TO THE REVEREND \_\_\_\_\_

THEE, ass deep-voic'd of not ungenial Zion,  
More than on heaven, the " unco gude" rely on !  
Giant in stature, but in soul a fly !  
Mind lost in body, fat, and six feet high !

Though unapparent, and of none effect,  
Thy light is essence of the intellect,  
Immur'd from sense, like gem of Giamschid,  
Or owl's eye, luminous in a pyramid.  
Is there a ranter who still wakes in vain  
Th' unwilling maggots slumbering in his brain ;  
Spreading the lily hand, with vulgar grace,  
Where rings usurp the splendid thimble's place ?  
Is there a saint, whom none could teach to stitch,  
A disputant in holy lumber rich,  
A bigot harsh, by pride and weakness taught,  
Who damns the soul, but could not shape a coat ?  
Is there a can't-be tailor of the Lord,  
Who quits his cloth to cut and mend the word,  
Weekly purloin his wond'rous weekly sermon,  
Steal common-place, and deem it dew of Hermon,  
Demonstrate that a devil is, and be one,  
Make earth a hell, but in his priestcraft see none ?  
Though in the hour of Nature's affluence made,  
To feed the awful dung-cart with the spade,  
Knight of the Goose, ere first of holy men,  
Prick'd by the needle, thou assumest the pen.

Servant of darkness! error's pious pander!  
And, if no goose, assuredly a gander!  
Think not thy triumphs give my bosom smart;  
What foe would wish thee other than thou art?  
From tailor's board to th' sacred tub preferr'd,  
Still may thy dire, somnific voice be heard  
By mice perturb'd, while happier bipeds snore  
(Rock'd by the tempest, heard so oft before)  
And slumber praise thee still, and evermore!

---

ON SEEING A WILD HONEYSUCKLE IN  
FLOWER,

NEAR THE SOURCE OF THE RIVER DON,

AUGUST 1817.

I.

WHAT dost thou here, sweet woodbine wild?  
Like all-shunn'd wretch forlorn,  
From good by rigid fate exil'd,  
From hope's bless'd visions torn,

And curs'd in Nature's genial hour ;  
What dost thou here, wild woodbine flower ?  
Here verdure frowns ! and, from on high,  
    Through vallies black and bare,  
(The realm of cold sterility,  
    Where thou alone art fair,)  
Don hastes, like pilgrim scorn'd and grey,  
In search of richer scenes, away.

## II.

How like a tyrant in distress,  
    Though late, at last, betray'd,  
This land appears in loneliness !  
    What gloom of light and shade !  
Dark mirror of the darker storm,  
On which the cloud beholds his form !  
Like night in day, how vast and rude,  
    On all sides, frowns the heath !  
This horror is not solitude,  
    This barrenness is death ;  
And here, in sable shroud array'd,  
Nature, a giant corse, is laid.

## III.

Is motion life ? There rolls the cloud,  
The ship of sea-like heaven,  
By hand unseen its canvas bowed,  
Its gloomy streamers riven ;  
If sound is life, in accents stern,  
Here ever moans the restless fern.

## IV.

Yea, life is here ! the plover sails,  
And, loud, torments the sky ;  
The wind, gaunt famine's herald, wails  
Hungrily, hungrily ;  
The lean snake starts before my tread,  
The dry brash cranshing o'er his head.  
And, on grey Snealsden's summit lone,  
The gloom-clad terrors dwell !  
It is the tempest's granite throne,  
It is the thunder's hell ;  
Hark ! his dread voice ! his glance of ire  
Gleams, and the darkness melts in fire.

Hurtles the torrent's sudden force

In swift rage at my side ;

The bleak crag, lowering o'er his course,

Scorns sullenly his pride ;

Time's eldest born ! with naked breast,

And marble shield, and flinty crest,

And thou, at his eternal feet,

To make the desert sport,

Bloom'st, all alone, wild woodbine sweet,

Like modesty at court :

No leaf, save thine, is here to bless ;

How lonely is thy loveliness !

Far hence thy sister is, the rose,

That virgin-fancied flower ;

Nor almond here, nor lilac grows,

To form th' impassion'd bower ;

Nor may thy beauteous languor rest

Its pale cheek on the lily's breast.

Who breathes thy sweets ? Thou bloom'st in vain

Where none thy charms may see !

Save kite, or wretch like homeless Cain,

What guest shall visit thee ?

Here, and alone ! sad doom, I ween,  
To be of such wild realm the queen !

---

### FRAGMENT.

HEAVIER the load, more wild the way !  
And I am like the wretch aghast  
Who, thrown on aged ocean grey,  
Struggles—for what ? to sink, at last.  
Still deeper, darker, shade on shade !  
If vain the strife, why strive so long ?  
Is there no hope ? Oh, God, thine aid !  
Only in thee, the weak are strong.

---

TO THE REVEREND J. B.———

WITH A COPY OF NIGHT.

A CARE-AGED Bard of thirty-eight,  
Weighing two stone more than cuckold's weight,

Who may not be the thing he should be,  
But would be clever, if he could be ;  
Who—lo, what good the loves have done him !—  
Has had eight bantlings father'd on him,  
And, though he ne'er had free grace any,  
Might tell his faults (some say they're many)  
Like Byron; were he skill'd to word it,  
But that he can't, like him, afford it ;  
Of form erect, and hurried pace,  
Not rather rough-dash'd in the face ;  
Whose grizzly locks, that once were brown,  
And somewhat curly, are his own ;  
Whose dark frock coat, and neckcloth plain,  
Cause him to be for Quaker ta'en,  
Or saint, (sad blunder !) or demure  
Quack Doctor, who all ills can cure,  
Save ills o' th' pocket, which the poet  
Would hide just now, but cannot do it ;  
In stature dwarf'd, not five feet seven ;  
Too much to sheepish blushing given ;  
With ghost-like brow, and pale blue eye ;  
As question'd man in office, shy ;

Yet form'd for action, though not well,  
And prouder than the devil in hell ;—  
That bard, whom Night's black malice curses,  
Because he scar'd her with his verses,  
Sends you his poem, (many a worse is,)  
Hoping you will with caution read it,  
Vidé—take't as physic, when you need it,  
In doses small ; for such will steep  
Clear optics soon in tuneful sleep,  
Acting by th' blessing, or by th' charm,  
And cannot do wise patients harm ;  
While heads with fudge fill'd full before  
Have no occasion to take more

---

## ELEGY.

OH, Devon ! when thy daughter died,  
The primrose peep'd on green hill's side,  
The winds were laid, the melted snow  
Was crystal in the river's flow,

The elm disclos'd its golden green,  
The hazel's crimson tuft was seen,  
The schoolboy sought the mossy lane  
To watch the building thrush again,  
And many a bird, on budding spray,  
Rejoic'd in April's sweetest day :  
She, too, rejoic'd, thy wond'rous child,  
For in the arms of death she smil'd.  
And when her wearied strength was spent,  
When pale as marble monument,  
Eliza mov'd and spoke no more,  
And pain's disastrous strife was o'er ;  
Her prattling babes might deem she slept,  
And wonder why their father wept.  
Why wept he ? If, with soul unmov'd,  
From all who lov'd her, all she lov'd,  
From husband, children, she could part,  
And meet the blow that still'd her heart ;  
Why wept he ? Not that she was gone  
To sing beneath th' eternal throne,  
And kiss in heaven, with holy joy,  
Her youngest born, that fatal boy,

And smile, a brighter spirit there,  
On him, still doom'd to walk with care.  
Yes ! still on him, from realms of light,  
The seraph-matron bends her sight,  
Still, still his friend in trouble tried,  
Though sever'd from his lonely side.  
He weeps !—for truth and beauty rest,  
Beneath the shroud that wraps her breast ;  
Taste mourns a sister on her bier,  
And more than genius moulders there.  
The blessing of the sufferer  
Bedews the turf that covers her ;  
And pallid want, from troubled sleep  
Awakes, to think of her, and weep ;  
And orphans, taught by her to read,  
Drop o'er her worth a silver bead.  
She did not pass in scorn your door,  
Ye drooping children of the poor !  
The Sabbath-school she lov'd to seek ;  
(The heart's bless'd tear impearl'd her cheek ;)   
And, like an angel in a tomb,  
Instruction smil'd away your gloom.

Her life in beauteous deeds array'd !  
Her death serene, as evening's shade !  
Oh, bless'd in life ! in death how bless'd !  
And bliss is her eternal rest.

---

## SONG.

MUST we part ? Alas, for ever !  
Now, an exile, I must go !  
Wilt thou then forget thy Henry,  
Sad and hopeless ? Mary, No.

Still, at night, when, faint and weary,  
Far from thee, to rest I go,  
Can I, ev'n in dreams, forget thee ?  
Angel of my visions ! No.

## EXTEMPORE LINES.

WHEN long the drama, in a sordid age,  
Had droop'd, an exile; to the desert stage  
Impassion'd nature, weeping as she smil'd,  
Led, by the trembling hand, her darling child :  
Even from the worms, upstart buried spleen,  
While Shakespeare's dust, in transport, murmur'd,—  
“ Kean !”

---

## ILDERIM.

## I.

'TWAS when th' unholyest warfare drench'd in blood  
Columbia. Of her woes spectator, stood  
Ilderim, laughing with vindictive ire.  
Where terror hymns th' Eternal, sojourns he

In gloomy singleness, and royally  
Maketh his diadem the meteor's fire.

## II.

Climes wild as fancy call him all their own :  
Dark, from his thunder-smitten granite throne  
Of vast, extravagant greatness, he looks down  
On worlds of woods, and borroweth of the night  
Clouds, swirl'd with thunder, for a garment : bright  
The lightnings play, beneath his shadow's frown.

## III.

“ Now, now, devouring discord !” he exclaim'd,  
O'er land and lake, as wide the battle flam'd,  
“ Now extirpate this homicidal race !  
Destroyers of my children ! groan and wail !  
Fiends of the deep, as spectred ocean pale !  
Now sweep each other from earth's blasted face !

## IV.

“ Dire was the day when ye the sad winds chain'd,  
And o'er the blue deep sought my isles profan'd !

Too, too prophetic, I remov'd my seat,  
And on my mountain-realm, in wrath and fear,  
Thron'd my dark stature : will ye brave me here ?  
And smite my children at their parent's feet ?

## V.

“ Halt !—Goblins wan, your day of woe is come !  
Quake, like these Andes, while I stamp your doom !—  
My sons shall furnish ye with dreams that shriek,  
Wake ye to death, which none but white men dread,  
Rip the red scalp from every coward head,  
And laugh to scorn your womanish wailings weak !

## VI.

“ Ye shadows of the ocean's drown'd, be pale !  
If mine eternal hatred ought avail,  
Ye want not awful cause. Now shall ye feel  
Pangs, not remorse ; and curse the servile sea,  
That bore your sires from shores without a tree,  
To smite my forests with the spoiler's steel.”

## VII.

Thus spake the tempest-rolling Ilderim,  
In accents like the shout of seraphim  
Hailing th' Almighty. Took he then his shield  
Of beaten fire, that scorch'd the fever'd air,  
And bade th' unbridled elements prepare,  
Slaves of his will, to bear him to the field.

## VIII.

Whirlwind and lightning roll'd his car abroad :  
High o'er the billows of the storm he rode,  
And wanton'd in th' intolerable light ;  
And, while the heavens beneath his axle bow'd,  
He smote, with iron stroke, the groaning cloud  
Whose fiery blackness shrouded earth in night.

## IX.

Oh, not with wilder pomp and majesty  
(While clouds are scatter'd o'er the moaning sea,  
And shipwreck's phantom far his sighing sends  
Around the barren isles) the showery bow

Of autumn, o'er a land of valleys low,  
And woods of gloom, and rocks, and torrents, bends!

## X.

Where'er he saw the white men's lightning flame,  
He stoop'd from burden'd air : wrathful, he came,  
In fire and darkness, o'er their fiend-like war ;  
Shock'd them together with the thunder's crash,  
Laugh'd as they writh'd beneath his fiery lash,  
Then, with his frown of horror, chas'd them far.

---

## TO A FRIEND IN HEAVEN.

## I.

THE warmest heart is soonest chill'd ;  
Contemn'd, it droops depress'd ;  
And if my own, to feign unskill'd,  
Seem'd cold, because unblest'd ;

Oh, by thy brief and troubled day !

And by thy locks, too early grey !

Best friend, and lov'd the best !

Forgive a bleeding heart in me,

False to itself, but not to thee !

## II.

When calumny hath shot his dart,

And envy done her worst ;

When parted hearts that should not part,

The worm of woe have nurst ;

And when, on earth's frail hope and trust,

Death deep hath stamp'd his seal in dust ;

Then truth through doubt shall burst,

To clear the mind's long-clouded view ;

And now thou know'st thy friend was true !

## III.

Oh, better thus be lowly laid,

Than live, with sorrow worn,

To say, while life's best visions fade,

“ The blissful are unborn !”

Outliving all respect to view  
The scorn that stabs, and scorn it, too,—  
Or pity worse than scorn !  
To see the seeming friend a foe,  
And all the happy fly from woe !

## IV.

Hard lesson, cheap at any price,  
And sternly taught to me,  
That human nature's cowardice  
Is woe's worst enemy !  
Pride spurns the fallen ; strength aids the strong ;  
And he who does not, suffers wrong,  
And bails iniquity ;  
But let the weak seem arm'd and still,  
And they will fawn, who else would kill.

---

TO ONE WHO ONCE KNEW ME.

FROWN'ST thou, to think a wretch so poor as I  
Dares write to thee ? and dost thou wonder why ?

All shalt thou know. Long, with chastis'd delight,  
I heard men hail thee blessed ! and fear'd to write  
To one who—awful in his morning gown,—  
Breakfasts no more on porridge greyly brown.  
Now, bolder grown, I scrawl to thee a letter,  
Hoping thou'lt deign to answer in a better;  
For she, the Goddess whom the wise implore,  
Hath rein'd, at length, her chariot at my door.  
But truce with metaphors ! methinks 'tis time  
Plainly to speak, and write plain prose in rhyme.  
This night, our rich aunt (may she still be richer !)  
Sent me two guineas, and of ale a pitcher,  
Besides four candles, and three quires of paper ;  
And, therefore, write I *by my midnight taper*,  
As thriving author should, since never more  
Will famine dare to enter at my door.  
My wife is gone to bed, (there lies she, fair !)  
That I may throne me on our only chair.  
'Twould warm thy heart, could'st thou the poet see,  
While my poor garret, bright as bright can be,  
Seems lost in wonder at itself and me.

My foes suspect (as friendship's self might do)  
I stole the candles, and the pitcher, too ;  
The very pot that holds our nightly beer,  
Jealous o' th' ale, (or I mistake,) looks queer ;  
And—by this beef, 'tis true, as these are pies !—  
A mouse peep'd, and scarce could trust his eyes,  
Scarce could I mine. Lo, rising through the floor,  
Again he peeps !—" What ! dubious, as before ?  
There, sceptic ! eat—and, henceforth, doubt no  
more."—

As some lean rat, long parch'd in famine's hell,  
Long doom'd by Fate, (but not content,) to smell  
The pantry's viands, which he may not taste,  
At length, gains entrance, and, with hunger's haste,  
Licks on Sir Loin's fresh cheek the dewy rose,  
Dips in the bliss of broth his ravish'd nose,  
Or, lapping gravy from its china boat,  
Feels as if furnish'd with new tongue and throat ;  
So I, long darkling through each dreary night  
Enjoy in gloom the luxury of light,  
With famine blue, on savoury steaks regale,  
Transported, quaff the amber heaven of ale,

And almost ask, with wondering hair on end,  
What witch has chang'd to *me* thy cream-fac'd  
friend?—

But writing is a task of thirsty pain :  
Friend of my youth ! I'll drink thy health again—  
Alas ! my pitcher rues inebriate theft !  
Not one, one thought-inspiring drop is left !  
Ah, why depart so soon ye visions, bright  
With feastful days, and nights of candle-light ?  
I see to-morrow in this empty pitcher !  
Oh, had I cobbled shoes, or been a ditcher,  
Or, like the devil, dealt in liquid fire,  
And kept a dram-shop, with good Christians nigher,  
Though poor, perchance as now, I had not been  
Half-craz'd, blue-grey, and, as a broomstick, lean.

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### EXTEMPORE LINES.

JOHN, who ne'er blush'd, is chaste, tho' rarely civil,  
While blushing Bill's queer tricks would shame the  
devil ;

But Hal alone is, in the genuine sense,  
A specimen of fossil impudence,  
Worthy of everlasting preservation,  
To edify each future generation.

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### THE DEVIL ON SNEALSDEN-PIKE.

DARK on his raft Napoleon stood,  
And, looking towards us o'er the flood,  
Vow'd what he would do, if he could ;  
When on Holemoss, the powers of evil,  
Each great, and every little devil  
Met, his high deeds to celebrate.  
Belzebub sat i' th' midst in state,  
And held and wav'd, in sulphury hand,  
Thick as my arm, a lighted brand,  
O' th' marrow made of heroes brave  
As ever won an envied grave,  
Who, fearless, fought, but fought in vain,  
In Underwalden's battle slain.

And fast the fiery cup went round ;  
And loud, their long tails lash'd the ground ;  
And deep the devil his daffy's took,  
Till star and planet o'er him shook,  
And sometimes three moons, sometimes two,  
Danc'd hornpipes to his maudlin view,  
Though split and torn appear'd they all,  
Like Suffolk cheeses, broke with mall.  
And higher still his voice he rais'd  
The more he drank, and, winking, prais'd  
His pupil's Machiavelian brains  
Which, draining Europe's richest veins,  
Made freedom's champions fight for chains,  
While mercy, pale with horror, fled.  
“ And come what may,” the devil said,  
“ Let Boney fall, or higher soar.  
“ Freedom shall fall, to rise no more.”  
Thus did the feast infernal end ?  
No—powers of goodness us defend !—  
For then they drank, on bended knee,  
Their hero's health, with three times three ;

And, since from heaven those angels fell,  
To feed on fiery pangs in hell,  
Did ne'er to earth such scene appear,  
Did never earth such tumult hear.  
But when, with hiss of snaky pinions,  
All drunk, they sought their own dominions,  
Steeds broke the tether; from the stall  
Forth rush'd the ox, o'er hedge and wall;  
And—worst of all, and worse than all,—  
Old Satan, from the hubbub hieing,  
Paus'd on the blast, and from his hand,  
Where clouds on Snealsden-Pike are flying,  
Dropp'd, with malicious grin, his brand;  
When, stumbling o'er the fallen light,  
A drunkard (late from Barnesly fair,  
And wandering, lost, in murky air)  
Stoop'd, took it, and, with mad delight,  
Fir'd, on the mountain's side, the heath.  
Dark, and more dark, the world beneath  
Frown'd, as the flame spread wide and higher,  
And Rumour had a tongue of fire.

Distinct in light, black Bretland tower'd ;  
Holme, from his mist, sublimely lour'd ;  
Awak'd, grey Dead-Edge shook his brow ;  
And groaning Don fled, pale, below.  
Far hamlets trembled as they gaz'd,  
And Fear averr'd the beacon blaz'd ;  
And loud the Devil laugh'd on the wind,  
Wagging his joyful tail behind,  
While wrinkled on his rump the skin,  
As if each hair had soul within.  
Why clos'd grey Will his tavern door ?  
What asking crowds from all sides pour !  
Why clanks so loud the hoof of steed ?  
Why yon pale horseman's darkling speed ?  
“ Why but because our fleet is stranded,  
And, worst that can be, Boney's landed,  
And coming, like a—cataract ;  
And whores are ravish'd, pig-sties sack'd—  
And York is burn'd—and Pontefract—  
And rolling drums to glory call  
The *dreadful* Locals, one and all ?”—

Hail, Crambo ! and, Night's muse sublime,  
Hail, and endure ! and, scorning Time,  
Heroes of Rother, live in rhyme !—  
And, hey for *our* town ! 'tis a sight  
To make a Cæsar die of fright !  
And what a strange and mingled sound,  
Like fire and water, underground !  
It is the hum of hurried feet,  
It is the Babel of the street,  
Where Rawmarsh bears, and Greasbro' witches,  
Ask, snuffling, “ What ail Tommy's breeches,  
Who, puffing, comes, all bones and wind,  
Dragging his bum a league behind ? ”  
But pity's muse will best relate  
The *sorrows* of that night of fate.  
Love, of the ever ready tear,  
Could not but be a mourner here.  
Queer tears, and manag'd well, she shed,  
By leering Tom, o'er faithful Ned ;  
Sad tears from pregnant Sukey's eye,  
Tears of tried truth and constancy,  
Some say, for Jack of Wickersly,

Others, for flame-nos'd Jem o' th' Mill;  
And quarts of tears for brawny Bill.  
Eyes, never stain'd with woe before,  
Now blubber'd cheeks and bosom o'er,  
For many a short, and many a tall one;  
And soul-drops might be had by th' gallon.

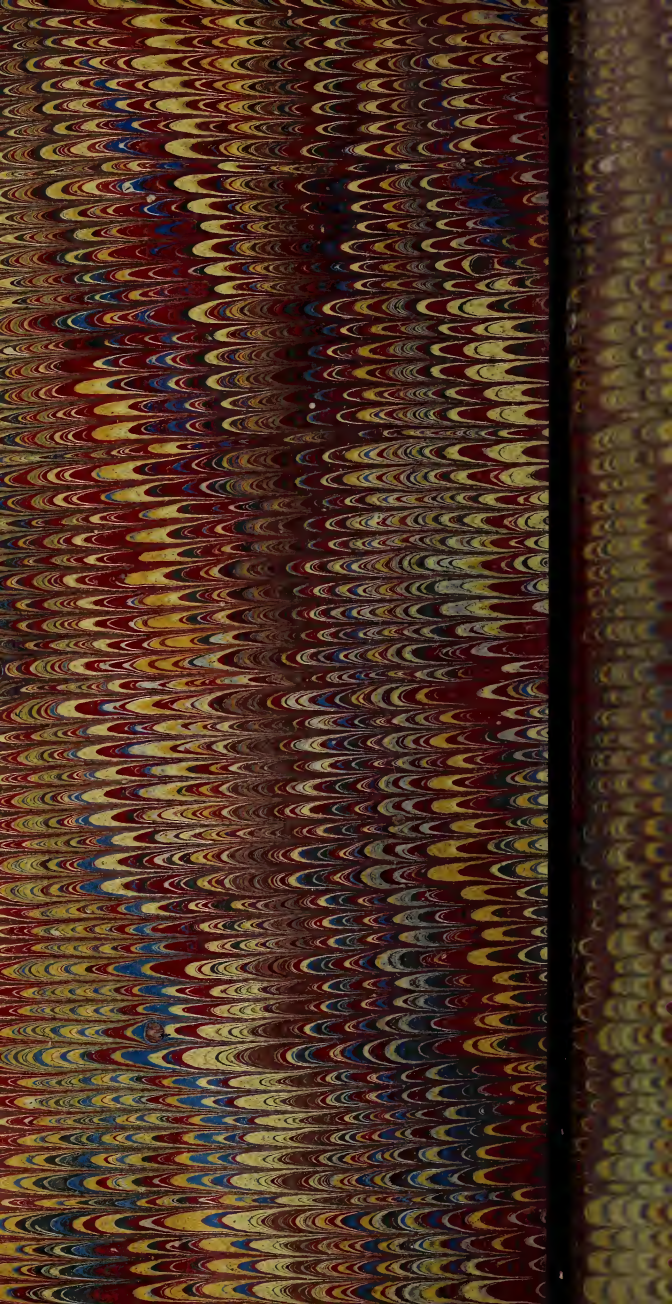
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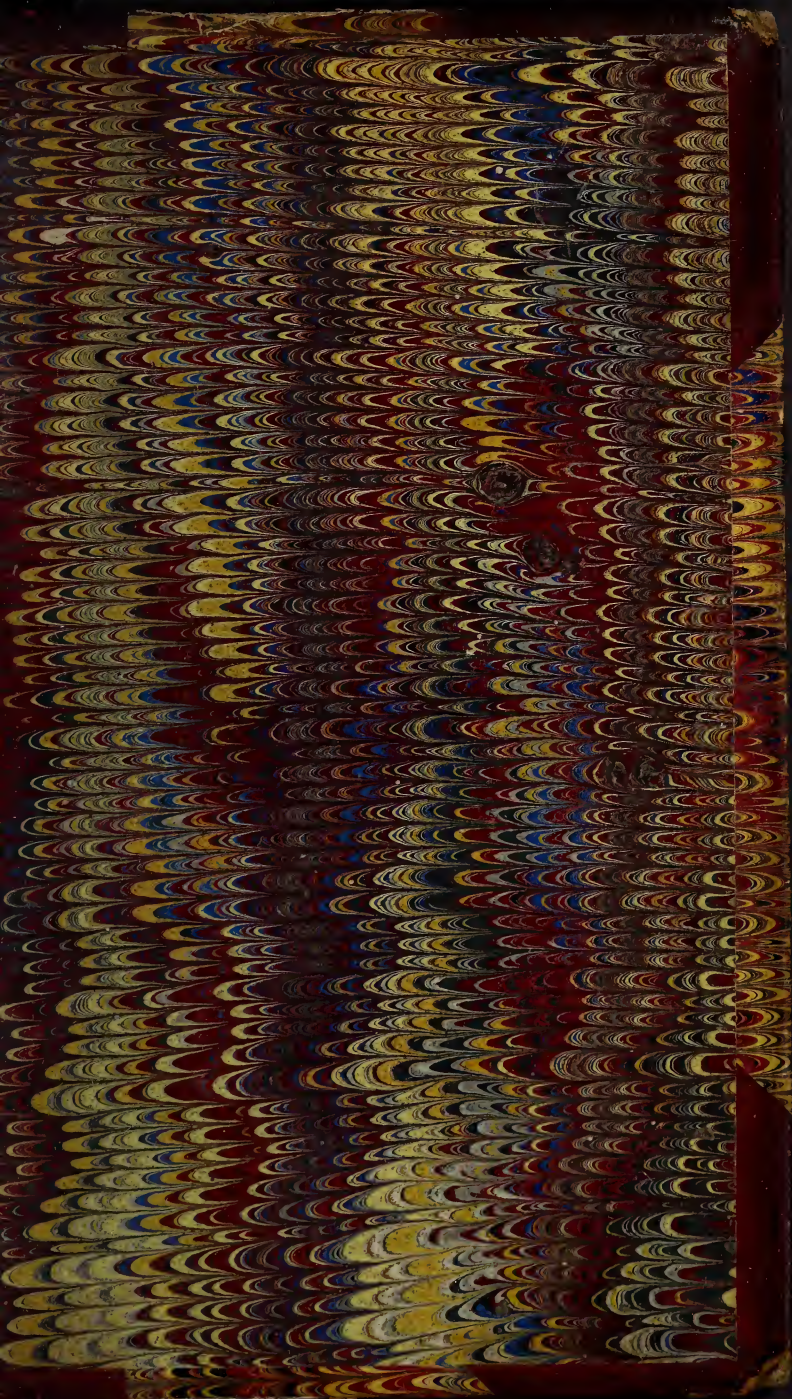












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